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THE SENATE AND MR. KELLOGG

IS A war right or wrong, just or unjust? This question, which Thomistic reasoning long ago set forth as an absolutely necessary moral prelude to engaging in military service, is restated with solemnity in the Kellogg pact. When all the nations have affixed their signatures to a document stating that armed conflict is reprehensible, it may require a considerable amount of ruthless indifference to issue an order of mobilization. The issue rests, of course, upon the development of pacific ideals in the public mind. There can be no doubt that some progress has been made. Bolivia and Paraguay, humming violent martial hymns because a dispute regarding border rights has arisen, seem more than relatively ridiculous to the rest of the world. Why should 10,000 placid citizens suddenly dream of bivouacs and uniforms when the matter at stake is of no direct importance to any individual? Against the war-feeling a veritable network of arbitral machinery has been put in motion. The Pan-American Conference and the League of Nations have both taken up the problem earnestly and promptly.

But if this situation does reveal the importance of public opinion and, therefore, of Mr. Kellogg's great idea, the need for discussion has not yet been removed. The Senate has an opportunity to enlarge the scope of the treaty by devoting intelligent attention to several details and by clearing up important doubts. South American relations constitute now the most important elements of our foreign policy. And yet opposition to the Kellogg treaty has come precisely from three South American nations—Chile, Brazil and the Argentine Republic. These have withheld their signatures because it seemed a foregone conclusion that the United States would exempt the Monroe Doctrine from the political territory covered by the agreement. A similar belief seems to have guided Great Britain, the "reservation" stipulated by Sir Austen Chamberlain being, for all practical purposes, merely an anticipation of the expected Senate action.

The earnestness with which English statesmen have recently stressed the point that their country has inherited from tradition a "policy" similar to that formulated by Monroe is one of the striking facts of recent diplomatic history. This is the background of the

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insistence upon that theory of naval requirements which has brought American and British representatives into such marked opposition at disarmament conferences. The structure of the empire being what it is, one cannot rightly expect that concessions must come from it alone. Some honest reconsideration of the scope of the Monroe Doctrine seems, therefore, to be demanded of us, quite independently of Latin-American conditions. In arguing at Lugano that a conference between Great Britain and the United States ought to precede another general disarmament conference, M. Briand must have been thinking of this disagreement in theory as well as of the divergence about naval parity. If the Senate can air the matter thoroughly and intelligently, it will do much to help make the Kellogg idea a law rather than a letter.

WEEK BY WEEK

MR. HOOVER has listened to the applause of western South America and has, fortunately, also escaped the bombs which—it had been rumored—were set to welcome him unto eastern South America. Everywhere "Viva Hoover!" testified to prevalent willingness to appreciate his visit at its true worth, and to supply the cordiality and information he had come seeking. We believe the trip will accomplish an immense amount of good, social as well as financial. Two details have arisen on the horizon, however, to demand attentive scrutiny. The first is of minor consequence and has to do with the announcement of a fund—some $60,000—to establish "prizes and scholarships to advanced students in higher educational institutions in the United States and Latin America." We are interested in this endowment, and wish we had something similar to administer. The second detail brings foreign relations to a head in Mexico City. No one can doubt that the break between President Portes Gil and the C.R.O.M. is a serious matter, indicating as it does that the forces of Morones are allied against the administration while the position of the Obregonistas remains dubious. We would scarcely be "plunged into surprise" (as an oriental friend has it) if something very sudden and precarious happened in Mexico about the turn of the year. That would leave to Mr. Hoover the full bequest of a long period of diplomatic bungling and public indifference.

What Mr. Hoover Hears

FEAR of a presidential veto led Senator Borah to withdraw his amendment, making government construction of a power house mandatory, to the Swing-Johnson Boulder Dam bill. With this feature eliminated, the bill, following its passage by the Senate, will be ready for Mr. Coolidge's signature after seven years of discussion and consideration. It must be noted, however, that many of the controversial aspects of the harnessing of the Colorado have been disregarded, not removed. This becomes more and more a characteristic of congressional action. With provision for the erection of a dam and subsidiary work at the cost of $165,000,000, three purposes are enunciated. Flood control, irrigation and power are the ends to be served. Several states, as well as Mexico, are interested primarily in the flood control and irrigation features, but the whole country shares in the disposition and development of the water-power rights. Since the work on the dam cannot be completed for many years to come, it is no doubt advisable that such a question should be passed on to Mr. Hoover, whose administration will have a more clear-cut mandate on government control than the present one. Although the President-elect's public declarations on Boulder Dam were disappointing, he made perfectly plain his opposition to anything savoring of government participation in business. It is scarcely to be expected that public opinion will change, during the next few years, to such an extent that an effective demand for government control will be made. But should such a change be wrought, there will yet be time for its consideration. Meanwhile it is highly desirable that the dam construction work go forward immediately and expeditiously.

Harnessing the Colorado

NO MORE appropriate spot than Hartford, Connecticut, could have been chosen for the recent meeting of the Catholic Conference on Industrial Relations. Distressing social conditions now so manifest in many parts of New England supplied a background for the discussion; and the Right Reverend Maurice F. McAuliffe, auxiliary bishop of Hartford, has been most energetic in extending social work throughout his diocese. Quite properly most of the addresses dealt with the important problem of the family wage. Professor David McCabe, of Princeton, developed the idea that consumers as well as employers share in the responsibility for economic justice to all. When the second are powerless to remedy conditions, the second "must not shirk the social pressure necessary." Whether relief ought to be sought in a program of public works, through the coördination of business profits and social charities, or in the development of industrial democracy was then considered from varying points of view. The speakers were in agreement regarding the Catholic doctrine of justice, nor did anyone ignore distress now actually existing. When "the average wage of Fall River cotton operatives is $15.54 a week," conscience does make cowards of all who keep on humming the song of prosperity. One is glad to observe that attendance at this year's meeting was large and, from the economic point of view, quite definitely variegated. The congress serves the very useful purpose, among others, of focusing the attention of Catholic teachers upon what are fundamental social problems.

On What Can a Family Live?

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THE case against the current use of the injunction in labor disputes was never more forcibly put than by Father J. W. R. Maguire—who is now president of Saint Viator's College, but who has a very much higher position in the hearts of those who love intellectual courage and moral zeal—addressing the New Orleans convention of the American Federation of Labor. Especially good was his distinction between labor as "property" and as "an attribute of human nature." This point was clearly reckoned with in earlier court practice, but has been lost sight of to a great extent in American decisions. One reason is, of course, the amount of racketing which has accompanied the rise of organized labor in this country. But while conceding this fact, Father Maguire reminded everybody that the way to punish violence and unwarranted interference is to enforce statute law against the culprit and not to override fundamental human rights. We wish that many of our juridical friends would read this address carefully. Some of them, at least, appear to us so energetic in their defense of property that they make the mistake of thinking all things property. If they decide not to agree with Father Maguire, his address will nevertheless give them ample food for serious contemplation. For, as he remarked, the injunction was a different thing entirely to English common law than it is to a corporation-lawyer-argued era in which technicalities often obscure an issue.

Indicting the Injunction

A NICE little comedy, very typical of the political stage, was satisfactorily concluded in New York City when Mayor Walker accepted the resignation of Police Commissioner Joseph E. Warren. For some months it has been a matter of general knowledge that His Honor was not satisfied with the administration of the police department. The Rothstein case crystallized his objections. Mr. Warren, his official staff, the citizens, the entire world, if it cared to read the reports on the situation, realized the mayoral desire for a new police head. Mr. Warren could not bring himself to resign; the Mayor could not bring himself to hurt his friend's feelings by ousting him. So the farce began. Yielding, no doubt, to the deepening conviction that the Mayor was less and less adamant in his decision not to dismiss him, the Police Commissioner finally sent his letter of resignation to City Hall. It was returned. Mr. Warren had said too much, and said it too controversially, about the true reasons for his retirement, and too little about the delicate state of his health. He, whose feelings must be considered above all else, then indited a letter which was so worded that Mr. Walker felt compelled to accept it in order to oblige his friend, who was cheered by praise for "a fine administration." So ends the suave episode. But the public might well ask for whom it has been played. It has in recent years shown its dislike for things that are not as they seem, nor do public officials gain by a policy designed to evade a frank statement of their actions and attitudes.

The Chief Retires Gracefully

THE writers of copy for savings banks must have been sorely distressed to read Mr. Henry Ford's statement made in Washington, "No successful boy ever saved any money." Thrift advocates can find no consolation, furthermore, in his added explanation that successful men spent money "as fast as they got it for things to improve themselves." He cited Edison as an example of a man who never "had any money until he got so much he couldn't spend it," and then emphasized the overwhelming importance of work. A country accustomed to parrot directions along the road of success has had tremendous schooling in thrift. It will not be easy for it to digest the theory of spending to succeed. Yet there is more in Mr. Ford's words than is customarily found in these impromptu interviews with the world's great and successful. Saving, like wine and practically everything else, is all right when judiciously used. Man's spirit is too often "cabined, cribbed, confined" by a materialistic urge to accumulate more and more moneys to the neglect of spiritual and cultural acquisitions. Nor can he always be sure that the success commonly accepted as the only goal is the state in which he will be most happy.

Thrift in Disrepute

NEW YORK has lost Gilbert Miller, managing director of Charles Frohman, Incorporated, to London which now becomes the centre for his theatrical productions. As only the most successful of his shows will be sent to America, Broadway audiences, as well as Mr. Miller himself, will gain by the transfer. But what interests us most is the impresario's reason for deserting the celebrated sidewalks. He finds that the American stage is "face to face with an economic crisis" brought about by an increase in expenditure which is so heavy that a play which draws weekly receipts of $12,000 may return its producer a profit of no more than $10.00. He is running away to avoid bankruptcy, in which, he adds thoughtfully, "There is no charm." Coming at the end of what has been called "the worst autumn theatre on record, full of cancellations, postponements, quick quitting and failure," his remarks will certainly attract attention to a sad situation. Playwrights whose accepted manuscripts are coming back to them, actors with contracts in their pockets waiting interminably for rehearsals to begin, will find an explanation for their distress, but no help, in the emigration of Mr. Miller. Intensive unionization of stage hands, musicians, scene designers and transfer men compels American producers—so Mr. Miller explains high production costs—to pay for work not performed.

Mr. Gilbert Miller Departs

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The unions might consider that overmanning an industry is as dangerous as undermanning.

Naturalism's Drum Major

OF HERMANN SUDERMANN, whose death on November 21 occurred almost simultaneously with the appearance of his last book in translation, historians of literature will continue to speak. No man did more to make German naturalism popular and effective, even though his work also paraded the naturalistic weaknesses without stint. Magda was an absorbing play, but it was a curiously stagy play without any convincing affinity with life. The Undying Past, which undertook to confute Nietzsche in the guise of fiction, was merely an unwilling tribute to that mad philosopher's greatness. When Sudermann expressed his very romantically minded pessimism in the form of a direct "photograph" of life, he appeared superficial; when he took refuge in symbolism, he became cloudy and unconvincing. Nevertheless there are good reasons for continuing to think him important. Few men were so representative of the era in German history which lies between the unification of the Reich in 1871 and the declaration of war in 1914. He was the product of an insincere and materialistic civilization; and while he found no way out, he sponsored the necessity for escape. Nor can anyone help marveling at a technique which, on the basis of principles which now seem to us aesthetically indefensible, gave to German drama an orientation similar to that which the Shavian impulse introduced into English letters. These virtues have been consistently recognized by German Catholic criticism, which of course was in relentless opposition to Sudermann's point of view.

Standing Room for Forests

THE report of the Forest Reservation Commission authorizing the purchase of lands to be added to the national forest system is noteworthy not because it involves something more than one hundred thousand acres, but because the areas to be thus set aside are located in fifteen states. In consequence many of the units of purchase will be small, but that does not matter. For we like this development in the government's forest policy, believing that it is far better to have in each state several small forests under federal supervision than it is to concentrate on a few large forests to serve the entire nation. It is a development in line with the admirable forest system maintained by some of the European countries, where each district corresponding to a township in this country has its own woodland serving the people as a vacation ground as well as in less palpable ways, and paying for its supervision with a percentage of its timber which is replaced, from seedlings, every year. The day should come when a national forest will be located within easy traveling distance of every city in America. We hail that day.

Souls Round Baker Lake

NOT so frequently as should be, word comes from the north to remind us that the work of the mission orders is not being confined to islands inhabited by savages, and tropical lands where dwell pagans of a civilization older than our own. This week it is a condensation of the despatches of Monsignor Turquetil, prefect apostolic of Hudson's Bay, which makes us realize even that the waste of mountain, lake and forest to the north of us is "God's country" in a sense more definite than that intended in the novels of Mr. Curwood and the ballads of Robert W. Service. Of most interest to us is the Monsignor's description of the existence of two young priests who minister to the Eskimos on the shores of Baker Lake, a body of water some 3,000 square miles in expanse, which is frozen over for nine months of the year. Within a radius of about two hundred miles these missionaries can count not more than sixty families, which represent, however, several different tribes. Naturally enough, work in such a pastorate is as slow as it is difficult. But the Church builds so surely because it builds slowly, and because to its cause come such builders as the two priests of Baker Lake, exemplars of the virtues of fortitude and patience.

From the Fez to Decadence

THE westernizing of oriental customs and costumes which began, in a definite way, with the substitution of the fez for the turban in Africa, and was more recently supplemented by the unveiling of Turkish women in Angora, moves at a rapid pace these days. The shah of Persia and the king of Afghanistan are both bent on clothing their subjects in the European manner, while in Turkey the Latin alphabet has replaced the traditional overnight by official order. That there has been opposition to these reforms goes without saying, but that it is religious in nature is worthy of note. We must all feel some sympathy with the leaders of the various cults which are making things difficult for Mustapha Kemal, and in Afghanistan are in open armed rebellion. We may hope that they will assert themselves strongly enough to force their governments into a compromise. But our reasons are not altogether their reasons. They would understand easily enough if we were to tell them we should like to see all peoples free to eat and to dress as they please, without governmental interference. But if we also say that we want the East to preserve its traditional dress in order to preserve its picturesqueness, our case may sound blasphemous to them.

CERTAINLY no such reasoning is behind the opposition of the religious to the westernizing reforms. But what, in addition to a loss of liberty, is actuating them into open revolt? Possibly their fear is the same as that expressed by the Chinese Society of National Education which in April of this year declared: "During recent years the young people have

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made it the style to imitate the worst foreign importations and to reject with disdain our morality and our secular civilization." To adopt an alien dress is a trivial matter unless it can be shown that with a new costume come new ideas. Somehow it falls out that in imitating another, either as to dress or as to morality, we follow the worst and not the best features of our pattern. Why, for instance, if King Amanullah must dictate men's fashions in Afghanistan, does he pick the drab styles of London instead of the pleasant costumes of Andalusia? And why should Queen Souriya ask her ladies to garb themselves as for the Champs-Elysées when the peasant women of Poland can teach Parisians, or anyone else, for that matter, how to bedeck themselves as the flowers of the field?

The Forum Up to Date

NEW fields of exploitation have been opened by the promoter responsible for last summer's Madison Square dance marathon, for now he seeks the champion long-distance talker in a four-day speaking endurance contest. We heartily applaud the idea and would like to see it established permanently. One of the minor tragedies of life has always been that those who must speak out their minds are too often without an appreciative audience. For them this is the ideal solution. A hall, where paying listeners will be glad to hear any speaker, no matter what inconsequentialities he voices nor how long he wags his tongue, will do much to satisfy a distinct social need. Let the repeaters of gossip, the tribe of after-dinner speakers, the bores of the drawing rooms, the soap-box orators, all the unquenchables of the day, hurry to its portals. Let the whisperers, the maligners, the shrews, the garrulous, even those who repeat the plots of books and plays and who read aloud motion picture subtitles, seek out the floor where they will be paid for their own enjoyment of self-expression. We would recommend such an institution to authors who give readings of their own manuscripts, to the perennial anecdoters, to the conversationalists at the bridge table, and to those who too trustingly believe they are "the life of the party." Surely the followers of flagpole-sitting contests, of cross-country hikes, of dance marathons and of all the eccentric scrambles for a place in the sun, will be numerous enough to guarantee a ready-made audience.

Strait-jacketing the Peasant

AN INTENSE nationalistic spirit, far from fearing overpopulation, looks to strength and vigor in numbers. And so Fascist leaders are actively displeased at the decline of the birth rate in Italy, although their country still remains one of the most prolific in the world. In the past two years a tax has been levied on bachelors, while fathers of large families have been granted tax exemptions and subsidies, and yet in the first ten months of this year the excess of births over deaths fell by about 15,000 from the figures for the similar period last year, due almost entirely to a decrease in the number of births. As reports from the large cities were especially depressing, a new emphasis has been given to the government's anti-urban movement. Italy's health is on its farms, the press argues, and the cities have problems of their own, such as unemployment, which are only aggravated by the migration from the rural districts. To check this movement, which in the first six months of the year added 69,000 peasants to the population of the eight largest cities, prefects in certain districts are empowered to force unemployed peasants in the cities to return to their homes, and to bring pressure on employers to deny them jobs, while elsewhere the farmers cannot migrate unless they obtain a (rarely granted) permission from the prefect. These methods, however, too closely suggest the big stick to merit general approval. By contrast, the world will certainly applaud the argument of Secretary General Turati that if life on the farm is made attractive, the peasants will not move to the cities. In his district he is offering inducements for more comfortable farmhouses, and has organized an ambulant theatre to lend amusement to the peasant's existence.

SESSIONS: SHORT AND EXTRA

THE plight of the Seventieth Congress, which is further complicated by President-elect Hoover's promise of a special session should satisfactory farm legislation not be enacted, is very much similar to that of the old woman who lived in a shoe. So many major legislative proposals confront the second session that it would be almost surprising if our ponderous national assembly knew exactly what to do. The annual appropriations for maintenance of government, consideration of farm relief, tariff revision looking toward that end, national defense, the Kellogg peace pacts, Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals development present agenda to dismay the most businesslike of bodies. Unfortunate, too, is the added similarity between the two houses and the Mother Goose lady. For there is a strong probability that the present Congress will spank the greater number of proposals with verbosity and put them to bed, leaving Mr. Hoover with the responsibility of their final disposition.

Thanks to the over-zealous Senator from Idaho, a powerful weapon for forcing a special session has been put into the hands of those groups desiring extensive consideration of their pet measures. Almost two weeks before the congressional convocation, Senator Borah was renewing his insistent demands that farm relief legislation should be undertaken not under the Coolidge but under the Hoover administration. After the flood of oratory loosed on the agriculturists, no one better than the farmer realizes that the problem is not an easy one to solve. It is notorious that the farmers themselves are united on no specific panacea. Mr. Hoover's promised special session may be pre-

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sented with a comprehensive plan by the new executive, but judging from his scant pronouncements as a candidate his solution will be mixed with questions of tariff, waterways development, enlargement of transportation facilities and other diverse factors. Surely the whole question is worthy of more than scrambled congressional action. But filibustering, although it may accomplish the end of blocking farm legislation enactment in the short session, is an obstructionist stratagem which should not be employed.

Meanwhile the struggle between the advocates and the opponents of a special session shortly after Mr. Hoover's inauguration goes intricately on. President Coolidge, ever solicitous for the delicate flower of American prosperity (really after the Republican paeans the country should be overwhelmingly convinced that prosperity under the Grand Old Party is a sturdy growth which no inclement weather could injure) frowns on such a session, which might disturb the economic situation and prove harmful to business. This explains his carefulness in expounding to his breakfasting guests exactly what legislative projects will win the presidential signature. It does not explain his demand for naval building at a time when obviously the most important matter before the Senate is the ratification of the multilateral treaties. No one can satisfactorily explain the wisdom of the President's call for more cruisers in the face of his known anxiety to accomplish the greatest peace move undertaken by an American statesman since Woodrow Wilson, as the crowning work of his administration.

South American study gives Mr. Hoover the same insulation from the question of the order of business before the Houses that he enjoyed when disturbing issues were being debated during his campaign. Privately, no doubt, he shares the widespread conviction that the short session, most descriptively termed the lame duck session, is an anachronism that should no longer be allowed life. That great engineering mind cannot be blinded to the absurdity in our legislative procedure which gives recalled representatives a voice in government and for thirteen months prevents the functioning of newly selected law makers.

Hence the whole kernel of the debate vexing the President, the Republican leaders and the leaders of the various groups apt to seek bloc domination, is that there should be no problem at all. There should be no short session. There should be no four-month interval between the election of a President and his inauguration. The new Congress, without recourse to the disfavored special call, should be at its business fully eight months before the time now provided by the constitution. Washington weather's unfavorableness for a January inauguration and other similar trivial objections should be swept away before the common-sense adaptation of legislative assemblage to modern conditions. The country has a right to expect from Mr. Hoover an early advocation of measures designed to effect this reform.

IS PROTESTANTISM DYING?

NO COMPLETE account of the convention of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, held in Rochester, New York, is available as yet, but enough has been published to justify certain interesting conclusions. Some time ago we repeated the remark of Dr. Karl Adam, an eminent German Catholic theologian, that talk of a "dying Protestantism" is ridiculous. There is likely to be less disagreement with that phrase now than there was a year ago. At least some aspects of the Protestant churches have been made very clear to us all, and we believe that the invigorating effect of this display is reflected in the convention proceedings. From the Catholic point of view, the matter is important for two reasons: first, it throws light upon the position of the Church itself, making possible a realistic analysis of conditions; second, it affords something like a barometric report about the spiritual weather of the nation as a whole, which in turn is determined by the wrestling of paganism with Christianity.

That Protestantism still clings to, lives by, the moral teaching of the Saviour is obvious, even though many of its proponents have been over-hasty in adopting the "language of the age." Nevertheless a certain awareness of modern psychology, of problems which are peculiarly contemporaneous, lends to the speech of its best spokesmen a charm and pertinence which can be applauded heartily. To men like Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, who have familiarized themselves with the best Protestant thought the world over and with existing social circumstance, there is given a definite power of enunciation which (we believe) is spiritually valuable to many listeners. His summary of social philosophy vitalized by religion seemed to us also wholly in keeping with Catholic conviction. Even more pertinent was the condemnation of companionate marriage, in which a plea for the sacrament was combined with a criticism of laxity, and the outspoken advocacy of peace. One is glad to see that a somewhat frenzied over-emphasis of this last ideal was corrected by a calmer diagnosis of realities. Much else of value was said, and at least some of it glowed with the deep spirituality which is, after all, perhaps the most really vital element of the Christian faith.

So far so good. No Catholic will fail to applaud this "speech of virtue," however much he might think ought to be added unto it. But in view of his commitment to the Church as the incarnation of undying Apostolic authority and as the source of sacramental life, he necessarily hopes that the "fulness of truth" may be given unto the United States. Though aggressive Protestantism be an antidote to paganism, it is also, historically and actually, the opponent of Catholic advance. For reasons which need not be outlined, this fact has recently been made abundantly evident. Nor was the spirit of the convention indifferent to it. There was, of course, nothing like an attack upon

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"Romanism." But speaker after speaker urged the solidarity of the Protestant mind as a reality which needs development, and suggested the "social conscience" as an addition to individualistic understanding. The possibility that a "united Protestantism" might seek to pool forces with "Eastern churches" then added a striking corollary to discussions of unification.

To what extent a religious outlook now pretty much a matter of fractions can be termed national is one question; how far it can become supra-national is another. We believe that conditions have brought about considerable chilling of Protestant missionary effort in the heathen and Catholic parts of the world. Catholics and non-Catholics share in the difficulties and opportunities present in China, but the first have gained a decided advantage. The failure of the Methodists in Mexico is generally conceded, being attributed to the psychology of the Indian. Yet there is no likelihood of a cessation of earnest effort. The Reverend Samuel Guy Inman, whose prowess contributed so many interesting moments to the session of the Senate Committee appointed to investigate affairs in Mexico some seasons past, was very much in evidence at Rochester. Indeed he appeared with a plan to rebuild and finance Santiago College, designed to minister to the young women of Chile, and urged the development of institutions throughout Latin America. It is, to say the least, curious to observe how little attention (comparatively) is paid to Latin America by dominant Catholic groups in this country. Only the Spanish and the Germans—the last-named in spite of a severe financial handicap—have done any notable work for the Church in the southern hemisphere. One may dislike the purposes and methods of Dr. Inman and his group, but one can condemn only one's own sloth and indifference.

In so far as the domestic scene is concerned, the Protestant attitude toward Catholicism is of two kinds: first, a sharpened conviction that this is a "Protestant country" and that the vast majority desires to keep it so; second, a feeling that the Catholic Church in this country is slowly but surely "coming round to a point of view" which will differentiate it clearly from the "Roman mind." We shall admit that, in several respects, the first belief is approximately correct. Nor is it undesirable that Catholic apologetic should reckon with the absence of factors which, though not of primary importance, remain helpful missionary agents. The Church in the United States is without the support of nationalist sentiment which made the task of keeping the Faith alive in Poland and Ireland easier than it would otherwise have been. Catholicism is likewise fettered with social handicaps—developments from economic and cultural history—which are apparent the moment one wonders why prominent "outsiders," with an unusual knowledge of and affection for Catholic life, remain in the pale "beyond." To reckon with these obstacles, to do all one legitimately can to remove them, is certainly a prudent moral act. On the other hand, however, we need to remember always, and to celebrate as fervently as we can, that long-continued infiltration of Catholic beauty and virtue into the American scene which arouses the profound admiration of every genuine student. Not the least lovable part of this is the fidelity and loyalty of immigrant groups to the Church which, in turn, despite the fact that its priests perforce had to devote themselves to the squalor and poverty of a thousand Clearings and Hobokens, has preserved for the poor the vision of America as well as the heritage of Christ.

But is "Americanismus redivivus," as the old phrase has it? Let us say bluntly that all talk to this effect is so much bosh. In the United States, as elsewhere throughout the world, there is some dissatisfaction with various ecclesiastical personages or policies. Convention and change struggle with each other even inside the cloister. All this is far less significant here than in other countries, for the simple reason that the United States is more conventional than other countries. Anybody who follows at all diligently the reforming effort of the present Holy Father will, we think, be amazed at seeing how vastly more "revolutionary" he is than the bulk of the American teaching Church. Mr. Donald A. Lowrie, who discussed this subject in a recent issue of the Christian Century in order to conclude that "all is not so simple and one-minded as it might be within the Roman Church," was singularly unaware of the evidence which he might have collected to substantiate his case. But the law, "Quod semper quod ubique," is as firm now as it was in Saint Augustine's day—is, indeed, the cardinal principle of contemporary Catholic change. We are different, but the Church is not.

If these remarks suffice to present a few facts and to clear up certain misunderstandings, they are, of course, not a set of rules for Catholic-Protestant relations in the United States. Such a code cannot now be laid down. Ever so much depends upon what ground the Protestant groups decide to occupy, and upon what readjustment the Catholic society effects. We believe that the attainment of common objectives through concordant effort is desirable. It is apparent that, from the point of view of the civic conscience, every genuine manifestation of Christian morals is commendable. But who can doubt that every attempt to bolster up nationalist prejudice against, or to foster ignorance of, the Catholic Church is not only to destroy almost the very possibility of charity between Christians but also to identify the Protestant mind with social and political fanaticism? In other words: leading Protestant churchmen cannot use the prejudices of an almost illiterate plebeian stratum both as a chorus for their own remarks and as an endorsing drum for "liberal sentiment." And what are Catholics to do? That is an interesting question, to which we may return later on.

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RENUNCIATION AND RESERVATIONS

By GEORGE E. ANDERSON

FORTUNATELY the Kellogg treaty, which is certainly the basis for a new attitude toward international law and international relations, is free from any exceptions or reservations. In the correspondence between the foreign offices concerned in the negotiation of the treaty, various conditions and limitations are suggested in connection with the practical operation of the treaty which have a bearing upon its scope and effectiveness, and are taken by some authorities as constituting reservations limiting the agreement. The weight of authority is otherwise, but whether such correspondence constitutes reservations or not is essentially of comparatively little importance. Since any future war will rest for its justification upon moral sanctions alone, reservations can in no way or degree modify or mitigate war guilt. If a war is justified by moral standards in the estimation of the world, reservations are both futile and unnecessary. If it is not so justified, reservations can give it no moral support. Of course practical international politics, like practical national politics, require a certain degree of adjustment of principles to situations. Reservations made or to be made by various nations parties to the treaty of Paris, envisage circumstances in which principles or policies held vital to the national interests of those concerned may be so involved that the nations interested feel they cannot submit themselves to the reasoned moral judgment of mankind with respect to such policies. The difficulty lies not in an unwillingness to renounce war under all circumstances, but in a desire to establish these vital principles or policies with the consent of other nations.

Happily the United States has few interests which are of a nature likely to render reservations to the latest treaty of Paris either desirable or defensible. Nevertheless, as the situation in the United States Senate with respect to this treaty develops, it becomes more and more evident that the question of ratification without reserve hinges upon the effect the treaty will have upon American policy in what is known as the Monroe Doctrine. Already several members of the Senate have indicated a disposition to favor reservations to the treaty to protect this policy, and there is really more danger of reservations to the treaty on the part of the United States, one of its chief negotiators, than there is as to reservations, made or to be made, by any other power. While it is to be expected that the treaty and all the papers relating to it will be given a most exhaustive examination by that branch of the federal government which is charged with the responsibility of advising ratification, there seems to be no disposition on the part of any party, faction or individual senator to oppose the treaty as a whole, or to put anything in the way of its prompt ratification in principle. The prospect in relation to a specific reservation in regard to the Monroe Doctrine, however, is not so satisfactory. Whether this doctrine has obtained such a position of general recognition in international relations as to retain its full force without a specific reservation with respect to it, and whether the United States will be justified in trusting to the diplomacy of the future for its effectiveness, are questions which are likely to appeal to all senators and upon which the Senate is likely to divide without regard to partizan connections.

In some respects, reservations on the part of the United States would be logical enough. Whether the suggestions made by the various powers in their correspondence relating to the treaty constitute reservations or not, the policies of these powers with respect to certain international questions are well understood. Great Britain has always asserted a special position with respect to the Suez Canal and its communications with its Indian empire; Japan asserts special rights with respect to its position in Asia; France has similar special interests to protect. Not only has the United States asserted the Monroe Doctrine as an essential policy in all its diplomacy; the Senate, in particular, has always been especially solicitous in matters bearing upon it in any way, and has always acted upon the principle that the Monroe Doctrine not only was a basic policy of American foreign relations but that it also has been necessary, or at least advisable, to avoid misunderstandings in regard to it by specific provisions in all treaties with other nations, or specific reservations in all international agreements to which the United States has given adherence, and which have involved the Doctrine in any degree. The League of Nations Covenant specifically excepted the Monroe Doctrine from the operations of the League, with a view of meeting this declared policy of the United States Senate. In its emasculated adherence to the World Court agreement the Senate, by practically unanimous vote, made specific reservations in regard to this time-honored policy.

In short, there is no doubt that the American people regard this principle as one beyond debate, so far as the United States is concerned. The only question is as to whether or not it is necessary or advisable that there be specific reservations in the new treaty with respect to it. If precedents in our own diplomacy, or perhaps in the diplomacy of other signatory powers, are to be followed, such a reservation will be made.

It is doubtful at most if such a reservation is either necessary or advisable. The Monroe Doctrine is primarily a doctrine or principle of self-defense; and since it is recognized, at least by implication, in both the treaty renouncing war and in all other treaties along

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similar lines adopted by the peace conferences at the Hague and otherwise that the right of self-defense is inherent in every nation, there is no reason, so far as the legal position of the United States under the treaty is concerned, why a specific reservation in regard to this particular principle of self-defense should be made. While reservations in regard to the principle have been made in other treaties to avoid all misunderstandings on the subject, it hardly seems necessary that such reservations be made in the present case in view of the defensive nature of the policy and our clear and unequivocal position in regard to it.

On the other hand, there are reasons of the highest importance why such reservations should not be made. The importance of the Kellogg-Briand treaty lies in the fact that the signatory and adhering nations are renouncing war as a principle, as a recognized national policy. The peculiar influence of the United States in the entire situation lies in the high moral attitude it has assumed, in the breadth and completeness of the renunciation it has insisted upon. American leadership in the movement which has brought about the new treaty—leadership so clearly recognized at Paris—is such that the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy is a renunciation of more than a mere legal right recognized by and under international law; it is a profession of faith in other and better means of settling international differences. That such renunciation and such profession of faith may be made most effective, the renunciation should be as complete and unequivocal as possible, and only an urgent national need would justify any exception or reservation to the broad principle laid down in the treaty. This urgent national need does not exist. Inasmuch as the Monroe Doctrine is a principle of national defense established by the United States in formal treaty and in diplomatic negotiations for many years, the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy in reality does not apply to it. A reservation under the circumstances would be as unfortunate as it is unnecessary. The truth is that, in the present temper of the American people, the United States would not go to war tomorrow or at any time save in the most extreme case of self-defense. It would go to war under such circumstances in spite of all the treaties in the world with or without reservations. Nor would any reservation on this subject establish the doctrine any more completely. The Monroe Doctrine, as a quasi-general rule of international policy, is as well established as any other similar rule, and is certainly as well established now as it ever will be.

Whether the United States specifically reserves any rights as to making war or otherwise under this new treaty and with respect to the Monroe Doctrine or anything else, its course in any eventualities in the future will be subjected to the analysis of international public opinion, and it will be supported or condemned on the basis of established principles of law and justice whether it has acted according to specific treaty reservations or not. The test is not whether we act according to the letter of a treaty, but whether we have acted toward other nations in accordance with the principles of justice and good faith which all nations habitually recognize and accept. Reservations as to the Monroe Doctrine or anything else have little to do with the case. The principles of justice and good faith must apply without regard to this or any other policy. After all, such reservations on the part of the United States or on the part of other nations are more or less puerile. There are few, if any, cases where any nation has protected its essential interests or improved its diplomatic position by reservations or exceptions to a general treaty agreed to by the general consent of nations. No nation can escape the condemnation of the world if it acts unjustly, no matter what reservations it may offer as an alibi. No nation has a need of reservations in a treaty if it acts in accordance with the principles of justice and good faith. The only effective sanction of this or any other treaty is the moral code. Violations of the moral code, among nations as among individuals, carry with them penalties which no nation in the long run can afford to ignore or override. The penalties may be less clearly defined than under municipal law; they may be less prompt in their repercussion; but in the long run they are just as effective.

The renunciation of war means that war is no longer to be accepted as a legitimate means for advancing the interests of a nation or indeed for the protection of its interests or itself, except as a final resort. To except any national act from the operation of this principle, therefore, is to confess a weakness in moral position which, in the case of the Monroe Doctrine and the United States, does not exist. One can hardly admit that the diplomacy of the United States is so sterile and its statesmanship so ineffective that it must bolster up a defensive policy with the threat of possible war, which otherwise is renounced as an instrument of national policy. The Senate itself can hardly make such an admission without implying its own weakness.

The negotiation of the treaty renouncing war has set the United States upon a high moral plane, and it is essential for the success of the treaty that the United States act unequivocally in accordance with its professions. The denunciation of war has come as a development in the world's progress toward better things; it is in accord with the most advanced and enlightened principles of international moral conduct; it has been embodied in international law by formal treaty and has the sanction of universal public opinion. Resting upon the rectitude of its intentions and its practices, the United States need have no fear that any just principle of national defense or national policy generally will suffer for lack of formal reservations in a treaty which, after all, depends entirely upon the moral sentiment of the world for its effectiveness.

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A NEGRO ANSWERS

By GEORGE CHESTER MORSE

(The following paper has been selected for publication by The Commonweal as perhaps the most representative of the several responses which were elicited by Mr. Aswell's article, The Church and the Negro. Its author was graduated from Lincoln University a few years ago, and is at present devoting himself to the study of racial relations.—The Editors.)

IT IS indeed surprising that a liberal magazine like the Forum has on its editorial staff one with such amazingly stereotyped, pre-Civil-War ideas concerning the Negro as Mr. Edward Campbell Aswell. He evidently is a Southerner of distinction who has absorbed all the traditions, indeed, but he has no regard for science or logic. What seems to me worse than physical slavery is the mental slavery of which he is not conscious. I happen to be a descendant of those who were held in physical slavery—this I say with no gesture of apology.

Mr. Aswell's article in The Commonweal of November 21 is stimulating, quite stimulating. It affords both laughter and indignation. The most ridiculous solution ever offered for the race problem is proselytizing the American Negro in the Catholic faith. How the Catholic Church will help the race situation is beyond understanding. The writer says it will help to maintain his self-control.

As far as the aim of the Catholic Church is concerned in converting the Negro, there is no need for alarm or jubilation. What few Negro Catholics there are are located in Catholic centres like Baltimore, New Orleans and Florida. In most other districts, Negro Catholics are insignificant in numbers and the Protestant Negroes are prejudiced toward them. Mr. Aswell might as well expect to see utopia on earth as to see the American Negro Catholicized.

Mr. Aswell makes sweeping generalizations of the kind made by grammar school pupils, not intelligent journalists. The theory of "the Negro's place" does not seem to be treated fairly. If the Southerner believes that the Negro is innately inferior, why does he bother to keep him in his so-called place? If he is innately inferior, it stands to reason that he cannot rise above his abilities. It seems to me that the Southerner aims to maintain the theory, even though he knows that in applying it in the laboratory of life, it does not work. If a Negro advances economically and educationally, he becomes alarmed because the Negro is acting contrary to his pet theory.

I would advise the writer to study a little more and to specialize in anthropology, sociology and psychology; and along with these, to peruse the Negro Year Book, that he may not commit such amazing fallacies again. Ever since a Dutch ship landed a cargo of Negroes in Jamestown in 1619, America seems to have been menaced by a great problem. In the first place, the problem is of her making. The Negro was brought here against his will that he might enrich the white man. Exploited for two centuries, he grew in numbers and soon the Civil War was fought to settle his status. Now that he has been given citizenship he is considered a problem, because white Americans as a whole have a tendency to preserve the problem. It is like irritating a sore continually, then complaining about its slow tendency to heal.

There are three approaches, if not more, to the solution of the race problem, that a very few white Americans do not hesitate to make. There is, first, the economic phase of the race problem that is generally ignored in attempts to solve the problem. In maintaining the theory that the Negro as a race should be kept in his place, white Americans deny him opportunity in those trades and professions for which many are trained. The labor element denies him the benefits of the union, and those in dignified employment express a horror of working with Negroes. Often this is mistaken for a Negro's desire for social equality. And in suppressing his economic progress there are many evils that result, such as poverty, crime and bad social attitudes, that white Americans attribute to race tendencies instead of to his abnormal circumstances. White Americans help to preserve this poverty, crime and social maladjustment and then howl about the acuteness of the race problem. And certainly America cannot be bi-racial, with two distinct economic systems—one for blacks and the other for whites—to compete against each other.

There is a sociological approach that is commonly ignored. The social maladjustment is a result of the Negro's economic dependence. Often white Americans abhor the dilapidated, congested, unsightly districts in large cities and small where Negroes are, not housed, but penned. In such districts we easily observe the fruits of the unwholesome environment in regard to both health and morals. When Negro families seek better homes and better localities, white Americans protest and fight them because they are not staying in their theoretical "place." They insist upon the Negro's living in those districts which are detrimental to his welfare, then cry out in alarm against such social maladjustment as a thing that is racial and a menace to American society.

And there is a psychological approach. Much of this prejudice is nurtured by wrong attitudes that have been handed down without being tested for their verity. Scientists have not found any race that is innately superior to others. The basis of superiority in individuals is not established in pigments but in potential capabilities. The American Negro has no affinity with the African Negro in culture—he is essen-

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tially American in culture. And biologically the American Negro is gradually approaching the Caucasian type. For proof of this statement, compare his complexion to the complexion of Negroes in the remote past, and then wonder about the slow process of amalgamation. Read statistics about the trend of Negroes and the mulatto, and encourage state legislatures to pass laws against intermarriage, and look helplessly upon the progeny of so-called illicit unions.

It seems a pity that the word "Negro" carries the needlessly odious connotation of a being whose color makes him innately inferior. The average person does not grant him individuality—he is a type. The educated, polished Negro is classed with the most vicious black moron, and many of the most ridiculous ideas are entertained about him.

What Mr. Aswell means by self-control is a puzzling thing. The term itself is vague, for self-control is a problem that each individual, whether white, yellow or black, must meet. Surely he does not attempt to array docility and self-control as antonyms. He accuses Negroes of being docile. If they were not docile, the Southerners would be up in arms to keep them in their theoretical place. Being disfranchised, and segregated, and burdened with an inferiority complex, the Negro's docility is taken to be indicative of inferiority. This inferiority complex is also harbored by white proletarians and the illiterate who accept their less fortunate circumstances with a resigned attitude and belief that it is natural for humanity to have inequalities. And his docility is a result of the idea that might makes right in the South. Let him fight for his rights, as written in the constitution, and what would happen? Will a man be indiscreetly rebellious within the shadow of a whip, and with his hands tied? What is that but self-control?

Mr. Aswell also asserts that the Christian religion which the Negro mixed with African superstitions saved him from slumping back to barbarism. If his religion saved him, why did it not save many white church deacons and ministers too, from joining lynching parties and witnessing human beings burned at the stake? Where in the entire civilized world are human beings burned at the stake besides the South?

To quote the distinguished Southerner, I wonder what he means by this: "Under these circumstances, the thing he needs most is wise counsel, encouragement to work and find his place in the solace and resignation which he can only find in the Christian religion." If this is the essence of Christianity, let me not hear of it. The Author of Christianity preaches brotherhood, and not the attitude of the pharisee toward the publican.

The distinguished Southerner is just one of the legion of budding journalists who still have superficial ideas concerning the Negro. The Negro has suffered long from such stereotyped opinions as his. Evidently he has refused to attempt to study and comprehend the race problem for himself, and, worshiping at the shrine where stand his many traditions, he kneels in reverence of them as the pagan did before his idols, not knowing nor caring for truth itself.

SIGRID UNDSET AND THE NOBEL PRIZE

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

MEMLING'S Adoration of the Magi, which hangs in the Prado, seems to converge upon the kneeling figure of the king who touches the foot of the Christ-child ever so gently with his lips. This shy display of masculine feeling in which courage and reflection are merged is one of the most exquisite and lovable details in all painting. Not a few critics have remarked that here is a representative moment in northern art expression, as compared with the more expansive and jubilant language of the south. However that may be, one must understand the meaning of such things if one hopes to enjoy the novels of Sigrid Undset, to whom the Nobel Prize for literature has been awarded in this year of 1928. Here is an art which is probably, of all modern writing, the most deeply expressive of the individuality of the Scandinavian north. In it there is a vast landscape, and a spirit coextensive with all life. But these things are broken up into a multitude of little pictures, upon the authenticity and poignancy of which the reality of the whole depends.

The same must be said for the peculiarly Catholic aspects of her novels. Mrs. Undset came into the Church with her children in 1924; and it is important to observe that, at least in so far as one is able to judge of such matters, the conversion was not the result of an abstract intellectual process. There are mortal folk who rule their lives with a carefully connected whip of arguments. There are others who find the meaning of existence in pictures—who must solve the puzzle by piecing separate little images together into a consonant whole. From a religious point of view the Undset masterpieces are, therefore, wonderful albums of illustrations in which the spirit of man constantly reveals more of itself. Their greatness lies first of all in the genuineness of each fragment, and then in the completeness of the cataloguing. Sometimes the light falls upon a scene which charms even the most ethereal idealist; but sometimes also it is dark with ugliness, or dim with northern brooding, and then one knows that these books reflect wide and bitter experience.

Kristin Lavransdatter, in three volumes, is Sigrid Undset's most representative book. The theme is

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Norway at the close of the thirteenth century, as viewed from one of the landed houses. Kristin, the beautiful daughter of a man in whom the sturdiest virtues of his race and creed are lovably incarnate, is destined to be the bride of Simon. She cares little for so humdrum a person, however, and (after a time spent in the convent at Nonnesaeter) falls passionately in love with a romantic knight. This Erlend she insists upon marrying despite her parents' opposition —they, like modern fathers and mothers, delve into reputations—and finally has her way. Erlend takes Kristin to his estate at Husaby, where everything is chaotic and unstable. Neither can forget days of illicit passion, or disregard moral consequences already apparent. Erlend is not an evil or dissolute character. He has stalwart martial traits, his respect for his wife is whole-hearted, but old Viking blood seethes in his veins. Life is not pleasant for either, in spite of their abiding love and their children. It is the fate of Kristin that she should "hurt them most whom she loves deepest." Angered by her constant fault-finding, Erlend finally involves himself in a way which reveals his share in a plot to dethrone the reigning king. Simon, the rejected fiancé, comes to the rescue, but husband and wife are further estranged than ever. Kristin leaves Husaby and goes back to the estate she has inherited. Erlend follows, is driven from the place, but returns to die while defending his wife against a mob. What remains of her life Kristin dedicates to expiation, so that her story ends with sorrowful, though loftily mystical, sacrifice.

No novelist worth bothering about writes of history for its own sake. And though Mrs. Undset has mastered a marvelous fund of information regarding mediaeval Scandinavia (her father, Dr. Ingvald Undset, was an illustrious Norwegian archaeologist) she never succumbs to the temptation of "period pastels." Kristin Lavransdatter is a drama of human lives in which a central, basic image remains at all times absorbingly evident. This may, perhaps, be defined as the rule proposed by Scupoli in his Spiritual Combat: —all the passions may be "purged," in the Aristotelian sense, may be encountered and dominated, excepting that "sting of the flesh" which blinds the spirit and which can only be truly understood by avoidance. Yet it is precisely here, in this elemental battle between flesh and flame, that the destiny of men is so universally and tragically revealed. Were it not for the "other" love, which draws the soul toward God, darkness and its powers would have full sway. But wrestling with Divine affection, we at the same time snatch the victory from passion. With these fundamental and abiding realities Sigrid Undset is concerned, but in the manner of the revealing artist rather than of the commenting moralist.

As a result she is often shockingly frank, drawing into the scope of her analysis details which, illuminating though they confessedly are, seldom figure in the world's conversation. Then again she is mystically serious in a manner which the worldling, to whom Jacob's ladder is an impenetrable myth, is powerless to understand. One must take the two—the upper and the lower reaches—as parts of the same harmony, as the treble and bass of a tremendously earnest symphonic composition. And the marvel is that no single episode exists for its own sake, being vibrant with the rhythm of the whole. Every character (and what a crowd of them one finds!) is an individual human being, but every one is also an atom poised between the two contrasting poles of the universe. If there is much fog and darkness in the story, humor remaining entirely absent, the drift is nevertheless in the direction of the light. We witness the progress of a race toward God, as the paganism of the north gives way to advancing Christendom and every home grows conscious of Calvary. Here, of course, the historical background performs an indispensable service. The victory of the saint over sin is not merely an idealistic dream but a matter of record.

The significance to modern thought and life are obvious. Mrs. Undset portrays the same creatures, the identical disarray, which an observer meets in the contemporary scene. Now as in the days of the northern apostles, our ears buzz with the arguments of indulgence against spiritual order, and with the evidences of naturalism. We, like the princes of Barbary, are asking: can mankind attain a new spiritual unity through freedom? In the fourteenth century, paganism gleamed through the mantle with which the Church had clothed the earth; today—at least in so far as industrial civilization is concerned—the cloth is wearing threadbare and the limbs of Dionysius are again exposed. If one turns from Sigrid Undset's novels to her personal history, one understands a little the pitiless heart-hunger which had guided her back to the Catholic tradition of her country as to a fund of food and drink, despite the fact that almost every vestige of that tradition had been lost to the children of three dissenting cenuries.

But open the novels again and note the extraordinary piquancy and virility of this art. It is often said that some women write like men. For all Sigrid Undset's unusual vigor, however, she seems always to write like a woman. The priceless gift of creation is united in her with a remarkable passivity in the face of impressions. What greater problem is there in historical fiction, for instance, than how to make personages live under the weight of their costumes? In Kristin Lavransdatter this is solved by drawing from the past that lives in tradition as well as from the past which has crystallized into archaeology. The numberless illuminations here thrown upon the human scene by observation of popular custom may be exemplified by one. When Lavrans comes to die he looks forward to a stay in purgatory as to a kind of combat to be waged for heavenly bliss—an attitude which, so I have heard, was characteristic even of immigrants from northern countries to the United States as late

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as thirty years ago. The actual reconstruction of mediaeval background is, however, infinitely careful and so convincing. The Mother Superior of Nonnesaeter is all of Chaucer's Prioresse, and more. Through the tutelage of Gunnulf, the priest, one is introduced to the whole of mediaeval faith. And for convincing summary of detail, nothing I know of can compare with the account of Kristin's penitential pilgrimage.

I can only repeat what I have said elsewhere by way of literary comment. Sigrid Undset, it seems to me, completes the cycle of return to mediaevalism in art. The early romantics yearned for the picturesqueness, and sometimes for the faith, of the middle-ages. What those ages really were mattered little, so long as one could sigh over a ruin in the moonlight and soothe one's tired modern soul. Sir Walter was something of an antiquarian (and more of a creative artist) but he painted his stage sets and hinged the play on a lady fair. The German poets were eager for theories and mysterious skeletons. Huysmans overemphasized, for the sake of his personal need, the occult doctrines of certain mediaeval speculators, and almost made Chartres a curious alchemic fantasy. But Sigrid Undset sees the closing thirteenth century as it was, without idealization and yet with profound reverence. And when she had finished she instinctively turned to the Catholic Church, convinced by a realism whose might is greater than the force of a thousand dreams.

I have merely skimmed the surface of the books and can do even less justice to the author's life. Born in 1882, Sigrid Undset received a commercial education and worked during some years as an office girl. This experience opened her mind to all the trials of the modern worker, but also left her more serious and bitter than she might otherwise have been. A brooding concern with what can only be termed the "life of the proletariat" characterizes her earliest work as a writer, which of course is hesitant and crude enough. With Jenny, published in 1911, she came into critical favor. The book outlined the career of a young art student in Rome, who sought sincerity and right conduct, but failed tragically in the end. Philosophically considered, Jenny reflects the spirit of Ellen Key, whose influence was strong upon many Scandinavian women of that time. Two years later the now famous writer married a prominent artist, to whom she was to bear four children. Little by little her mind turned from the modern scene to the past which her father had studied so ardently and patiently. A "new style," modeled upon the sagas, is apparent in a version of an Icelandic narrative published fairly early, and in the remarkable translation of the romances of King Arthur which appeared in 1915. Apparently she was also deepening the purely philosophical aspects of her life. Et Kvinde-synpunkt, not translated into English, is a curious volume of essays which records the conclusions at which she had arrived by 1919. Catholicism is championed, notions of emancipation are repudiated, but Soviet Russia is acclaimed as a step toward social justice. By this time, work on Kristin Lavransdatter had already begun; and two years after it was completed, during 1924, Sigrid Undset came into the Catholic Church.

A new trilogy has absorbed her energy since then. Thanks to the effort of Mr. Alfred Knopf, the American publisher, The Master of Hestviken is being translated into English almost immediately after its appearance in Norwegian. The contours of this new story are sombre, the tempo is slow and meditative. Olaf Andusson and the girl he loves are etched with magnificent deliberation against an early mediaeval background, so that the narrative has a definite saga flavor. It is in a manner ruder and more primitive than Sigrid Undset's earlier novels, but it is also more profoundly spiritual. Though the central theme is almost identical with the dominant note in Kristin Lavransdatter, a host of utterly new characters, with differing problems and temperaments, are crowded into the drama. One misses the wealth of descriptive mediaeval detail, which obviously must be absent from a portrait of earlier, cruder times.

It is characteristic of Sigrid Undset that the news of the Nobel Prize award should have found her busily watching over her children, in a house far up in the Lillehamer valley. The mountains of Norway here close in a landscape which conserves many of the simple, rugged beauties of the past. She loves these old things even as her heart goes out to the newest, most startling things—children. A critic has noted the frequency with which the word "violently" figures in Sigrid Undset's writing. I should like to add that much more often there are wonderfully comprehensive allusions to motherhood and children; and every shadow resting upon these is perceived with sensitive sympathy. Small wonder that such a woman should have given the first part of the prize money to help in the care of mentally defective little ones. We are glad that in Sigrid Undset humanity, art and the Catholic faith have been honored.

Apocalypse, XVIII

"And souls of men"—is then Thine image, Lord,
The least of all, the paltry, pitiful end
Of all those caravans that slowly toward
The sun, across the drifting deserts wend;
Of all those stately ships set out to sea,
With golden wares of delicate device,
With shimmering silks and fine-wrought ivory,
Jacinth and emerald, gems beyond all price;
Logs of the fragrant cedar, casks of oil
And wine; sweet frankincense—Yet more? At, then
The last of that proud sacrifice and spoil:
"The sheep, and beasts, and slaves, and souls of men."

Merchants, to what strange lands, beyond what seas,
Bear ye the shattered loveliness of these?

SISTER MARIS STELLA.

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IS THE SOUL A MYTH?

By M. W. WESTON

THE Forum for October contained an article by Clarence Darrow—The Myth of the Soul—which tempted me to try and put in words some of the thoughts and feelings it awakened. It must have had a like effect on many other people: for the Forum editors sent back my warm reflections, with the courteous statement that they were about to publish so much material bearing on Mr. Darrow's thesis that they felt unjustified in printing any more. I therefore waited to see whether my particular reaction would be set forth by someone better qualified than I, before endeavoring to find another journalistic outlet for it.

Today, however, my December Forum assures me that what struck me as most dangerous in Mr. Darrow's paper has not been touched on in material so far printed, and still calls for the comment I had been moved to make. In his attack on the persistent human intuition that men have "souls," that these souls will survive bodily death, and that the terms of their survival are conditioned by the way souls have conducted life lived "in the flesh," Mr. Darrow lays stress, repeatedly, upon the need of "evidence" to prove that the beliefs arising from and sanctioned by this intuition are not based on pure "myth." He does not make it clear whether he thinks the soul has only mythical existence because no one can tell just how or when it enters into flesh. ("If man has a soul it must creep in somewhere during the period of gestation and growth.") He gives no definition of what he understands, himself, by "soul"; but is quite positive that if the word implies "the identity, the consciousness, the memory of the individual," no soul can possibly continue to exist after the flesh that clothed it suffers death. Belief that souls live on, suffering or triumphing according to the fate their conduct has deserved, he seems to think, is the most harmful portion of the "myth" which reasoning based on scientific research is to dispel. He says "there is no evidence to show the truth of this belief"; and though he qualifies his dangerous assurance by the word "perhaps," he shows misleading confidence that "evidence can be found to support a positive conviction that immortality is a delusion."

This confidence, I think, cannot be justified by any "evidence" presented in his paper. And I believe the gravest of all risks is run by any who may lightly take the reasoning he bases on it as conclusive—the risk of finding, when life's opportunity is gone, that he and they have been mistaken. This risk is man's great aid in cultivating the virtue of endurance, quite independently of religious faith. In his endeavor to discountenance belief in a reward awaiting righteous souls when death is past, Mr. Darrow declares:

> If people really believed in a beautiful, happy, glorious land waiting to receive them when they died; if they believed that their friends would be waiting to meet them; if they believed that all pain and suffering would be left behind: why should they live through weeks, months, and even years of pain and torture while a cancer eats its way to the vital parts of the body? Why should one fight off death? Because he does not believe in any real sense: he only hopes. Everyone knows that there is no real evidence of any such state of bliss; so we are told not to search for proof. We are to accept through faith alone. But every thinking person knows that faith can only come through belief. Belief implies a condition of mind that accepts a certain idea. This condition can be brought about only by evidence. True, the evidence may be only the unsupported statement of your grandmother; it may be wholly insufficient for reasoning men; but, good or bad, it must be enough for the believer or he could not believe.

The peril in allowing statements like these to go unchallenged lies in the fatal power they may exert upon the minds of persons inexperienced in life. For final and convincing proofs that the Abiding Source of life and good men have divined as "God" exists, and will eventually be made clear as the reward of those who have believed in, sought and served the revelation of Its righteousness, can be forthcoming only for the souls who seek and serve. If boys and girls cannot believe in the reality of anything biologists and chemists do not "demonstrate," they are unlikely to seek knowledge of the ways of God, or try to do what Christ declared to be God's will for man: therefore they will not bring to light the promised fruits of doing so. Supposing that these promised fruits might be vouchsafed as the reward of properly directed efforts to obtain them, all of mankind, as well as all "unprofitable" individuals, may sustain an irreparable loss, because of unbelief in good which might have been made actual.

The days when an obedient child was saved from taking dangerous steps by crediting "an unsupported statement" of some trusted elder as to "eternal" consequences of going "right" or "wrong" seem to be over, under scientific tutelage: all the intelligence of youth is, perforce, set at liberty to enthrone presently the Spirit that shall guide, rule, judge man's ways. I say "perforce" because the elders, as result of their own sins, have lost their right to speak with a traditional authority. It is a vital, universal need that youth should be sufficiently informed not to take lightly its responsibilities toward life and toward "the world to come." It ought to recognize and take into account two undeniable and "reasonable" truths: first, that desired "evidence of things not seen" finds its substantiation through the words and deeds of men

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who, owing to some "faith," take courage to make real, both for themselves and for their fellow-men, good they desire and hope—but "only hope"—to see; second, that no amount of "reasoning" as to probabilities can furnish proof that death annihilates man's memory and consciousness, thereby exempting him from the suffering which, to a nature such as man can show, might be involved in their persistence. It cannot be "evidenced" to any would-be suicide, this side of his own grave, that he may not become aware, even within the instant of his dissolution, of being recreant in his world's stupendous fight to make all flesh witness the power of an Immortal Spirit, enabling man to bear, believe, hope and endure all things—and recreant because of cowardly unwillingness to take and keep his own place in the ranks. It cannot be proved to him he will not have to recognize, too late, in the dead body he is tempted to give up, his soul's essential instrument, entrusted to its care, for serving an "Eternal Something, not ourselves, That makes for righteousness the power of an Immortal Spirit, enabling man thing is not, eventually, to shine forth as the Transcendent Glory of the Lord of Hosts, in which all souls that can "endure to the end" may, in the end, rejoice.

Should a man take some easy way to leave a battlefield where human suffering, and even human sin, seem indispensable for showing forth divinely human power to overcome, and then behold the calibre of his own soul condemned forever by its traitorous refusal to endure, the shame and horror of that sight could constitute eternal hell for him, even if merciful annihilation of memory and consciousness should straightway supervene. The forfeiture by personal default of the chance to fight for, possibly to share, the glory of a supreme victory of the All Highest becomes eternal for defaulters just as soon as their own last chance has passed beyond recall. And an eternity of suffering in recognizing this might take place in the twinkling of an eye. "Eternity," said Emerson, "is deep as well as long."

No evidence that physicists have power to produce can convey positive assurance to mankind that unveiled truth will not, at death, scorch the stripped soul of every human being whose conduct has disgraced the holy names of God and man. Fear of what such a fire must make plain to those whose failure comes of cowardice, could by itself, I humbly hope and pray, nerve my poor soul "to live through weeks, months, even years of torture, while a cancer eats its way to the vital parts of the body," if that is how my loyalty should finally be tried. But I have watched my fellows undergo such tests, and seen their cheerful courage giving evidence of incontestable reality, of strength, even of tenderness, in the "Eternal Something" showing Itself through and above their pain. To recollect that would beget in me a trembling hope that bravery of mine might do for others what the bravery of others did for me: and the hope would join hands with my fear of failing, and help me cling to my last chance to overcome. What human flesh has once been seen to bear with fortitude, the human spirit gives assurance that a brave soul can endure once again, unflinchingly. And it is by enduring to the end that timid souls grow brave, and weak ones strong.

Hope and fear counterbalance one another. In trying to dispel what he considers a misleading hope that there exists "a beautiful, happy, glorious land waiting to receive" souls when their bodies die, Mr. Darrow fails to take into account what seems to me quite incontestable—the fact that dread of being found unworthy to inhabit such a place has had far greater influence in molding character than any golden promise it held out of bliss. For the bliss was not, as he implies, assured to all souls. It is because their paradise was to be gained or lost, according to the deservingness of men, that even material ideas of it have spurred mankind to try and walk upright, not groveling like beasts. There is no evidence, apart from Christian evidence which Mr. Darrow disallows, that human souls, in forms by which they may be recognized, enjoy beatitude in heaven, as their reward for godly lives led in the flesh on earth. But there is evidence, in heart-breaking abundance, that here on earth, even before they die, men suffer agonies in private hells resulting from their own or from their parents' sins. And there is evidence that general hells, such as war, pestilence and famine unsparingly create for good and bad alike, can never be escaped until men know, obey and teach the law of godly life. That heaven does not exist it is impossible to ascertain or prove. That hells on earth are evident no one is able to deny—bitterly to be tasted by mankind before they pass beyond the ken of onlookers whom sight of their torments warns. And in these hells is evidence that what suffers most keenly, making the agonies of human flesh more terrible than flesh of any other animal can show, is the human soul—something which Mr. Darrow thinks is "mythical" but which the Catholic Church defines as "a spirit which is like to God because it will never die, and has understanding and free will."

There is evidence, as well, that the reason human souls suffer so hideously in torments of their flesh is that they cannot get rid of the idea these would not have occurred had they themselves, or other men, done something other than the things they did. The suffering is worst when any soul sees reason to believe that words or actions of its own have loosed the horrors overwhelming it—when "understanding" shows a man that the path his "free will" let him take has brought him to this pass.

Though truth of the belief that men actually have free will to do or leave undone evil or good cannot be demonstrated, and has often been denied, those who have wilfully, or even carelessly, aided in bringing on catastrophe seem helpless to escape their own conviction that it was once within their power to take the right road or the wrong; and that their own mistaken

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ways have been to blame for what is taking place. Agony caused by such conviction stamps itself on the human countenance when men are facing it and shows that they have souls, and that those souls are in hell.

Fear lest they or their loved ones come to know the torments of such hell is a powerful incentive to mankind to cease from doing evil and learn to do good. Religious zealots, recognizing this, have striven to enhance its power to effect reform by teaching that the torments of the damned will never end. Such an assertion naturally follows the belief that souls can never die; but neither tenet is susceptible of demonstration, to the end of time. The effect of its enhancement of men's fears may easily be bad rather than good, though it has probably scared into an amendment of their ways some gross and brutal natures not to be moved by any vision less appalling than that of the everlasting torture of their own resurrected flesh. Terror of the "everlastingness" of punishment is mitigated by belief that a repentant soul, gladly accepting its own sufferings as deserved, is not denied an opportunity to expiate wrongdoing after death, through purgatorial pains. And there is evidence, here upon earth, of peace of soul obtained in just this way by numbers of repentant sinners who did not wait for death to claim the promise of salvation from their "memory and consciousness" that glad acceptance of some purging pain could give.

We can, then, see on earth souls engulfed in the deadly pains of hell and souls becoming strong and pure through pains of purgatory. Can we cite any evidence of souls beheld so near to the achievement of their heaven as to make heaven's existence seem believable to those still far from personal assurance of its ineffable realities?

In bringing forth evidence as to heaven, anyone who attempts to offer it to Mr. Darrow will be severely handicapped by his tacitly expressed intention to treat the witness of professing Christians as being worthless, in his sight, to prove the truth of anything they say that they believe. Yet it is Christian visions of heaven only that he attacks as harmfully deluding men to work and fight for things as yet unseen, which he is sure can never be made visible on earth, owing to the infinite corruptibility of all material forms. Every less radiant conception of a life beyond the grave has, by now, shown its inadequacy to impart the requisite and "lasting" superhuman strength in which men rise as gods to overcome world evil by their faith in life and good. World evil dreads no resurrected pagan deities. All those have seen their day, and are no longer to be feared for the possible efficient inspiration they might bring to save man's world from the impending death which physicists foretell with such commendable acceptance of extinction for themselves. But "believing" Christians are still flaunting their high hope, still "going strong," still preaching the deceptively good news that earthly life is but a passing show, through the "appearances" of which an Everlasting Spirit tests and tempers the keen mettle of men's souls (souls being, we remember, spirits like to God, in that they have both understanding and free will, and may, by conscious exercise of these immortal attributes, grow finally into perfected likeness of the Spirit's Own Perfection, adorable in heaven before the existence of all worlds, but still—as Mr. Darrow has remarked—on earth as yet unseen except by those who are able to believe that It was once for all made visible in Christ.)

Of course, it was not until after the foretold showing of the Christ laid open, to "believers' " eyes the closeness of God's kingdom to themselves that any "evidence" it actually is at hand gladdened men's hearts and souls. Since then phenomena have been repeatedly observed which a believer can explain only upon the glorious hypotheses: that what the prophets had foretold concerning a great Messenger Who should reveal the way of God in man was truly spoken and has already been, in part, fulfilled; that living words Christ uttered as of God are also true, and will not pass away, but return in their majesty to judge mankind; and that the declarations of His countless followers that an arisen Christ lives in themselves, enabling them to keep even His hardest sayings living unto the end, have been, and are, justified by the record of the saints. No one, in reading Mr. Darrow's arguments, would ever dream—unless he had heard about the myth from someone else—that these ignored phenomena had once so changed the aspect of a naturally disbelieving world that it appeared pregnant with growing evidence that God's will actually might be done on earth, even as it is in heaven—provided only that men could believe in their own earthly possibilities of doing it. Therefore, in answering, it is expedient to refrain from offering Christian witnesses that even on earth men have seen faces of their brethren reflect a light neither of land nor sea, glowing with joy of a foretasted heaven. I will submit, instead, undoubted facts which constitute, to my own mind, "evidence upon which to build a positive belief in immortality." Mr. Darrow states roundly that "there is no evidence"; and as I must suppose a lawyer with his training has carefully considered everything which could possibly upset his case, I write without hope of convincing him. But it is possible my offering may possess appeal for minds more changeable than his. It is for such I write.

As far back as man's records go, and in all lands where travelers' footsteps ever strayed, there have been witnessed men enduring torments of their flesh unflinchingly—calmly commanding captains of their souls—for the sake of things invisible, like justice, truth and mercy, to be shown their fellow-men. Through their endurance has been made visible the mighty working of a not yet exhausted Spirit, Which through the ages has united all human beings who have looked upon Its preservation as more needful than their own. Just the same poignancy of fleshly suffering

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that can reveal some men as having, through their own will to cause, and fear to suffer, pain, fallen below the level of any beasts, can reveal others as potential sons of God—too often sons who suffer without hope of ever looking on their Father's face, but sons who, none the less, know themselves as true offspring of an abiding truth, possessing understanding and free will that can forever save men from degeneration into beasts or from evolving into soulless mechanists. So long as truth's eternal life shines steadfastly through one man's dying eyes, others will catch its fire, and rise to follow him beyond death and the grave, careless of the seeming victory that these may threaten him withal.

The endless procession of such godly men is to me evidence that immortality is no delusion—not that each separate soul lives on forever in an isolated consciousness of joy or of despair, but that there has existed since before worlds began, exists now, and will never see extinction, an Everlasting Something not ourselves, making for righteousness and peace on earth, for all men of good will: the joy of seeing Which can raise mankind to ecstasy; the dread of losing Which thrills them with holy fear. To know, as "true believers" know, that oneself may, through superhuman victory, enter into the Spirit's conquering joy, is to possess eternal life within oneself. Even the selfless hope that others might eventually do so upheld strong souls of the pre-Christian days against despair. Even the waning light of their spent dreams could be, to a Victorian poet who found Christ less appealing than the gods and heroes of the pagan Greeks, an earnest of the truth he told the world:

> Enough of light is this for one life's span,
> That all men born are mortal, but not man.
> And we men bring death lives by night to sow,
> That man may reap and eat and live by day.

That was "enough of light," before Christ's star dawned in the East, to show men fighting everywhere, even in old-world dimness, for great truths their fighting left enthroned in seemingly immortal guise. It is enough to keep whole peoples who have not yet seen that star noble in high traditions of their own. It is not, I believe, enough to save from deep despair of heart and soul a western world to which the Light of Life Itself once came, which once looked up to welcome and be ruled by It: and which sees darkness threaten to cut it off—a darkness evil-minded men prefer, because it can obscure their evil deeds. Beyond the West I see no promise of a glad dayspring if such an immortally hailed dawn proves false to the earth's hope. Is it fair to the rising generation who, for earth's ruling, are to judge the case for and against belief in soul survival, to give to them no hint of the "great cloud of witnesses" who, once themselves held in the shadows of impending death, have seen these shadows pierced by radiance transfiguring them and their surroundings by intimation of veiled glories near?

THE ACADEMY SURVIVES

By FREDERIC THOMPSON

ON ENTERING the one hundred and third annual winter exhibition of the American National Academy of Design, one is bound to be overtaken by an awful suspicion. In spite of the confused impressions incident to being surrounded by canvases on every conceivable subject crowded from wainscot to ceiling, the suspicion waxes in inevitableness and clearness: has not every one of these things been done before? Surely they have all been done before, again and again and again. As the suspicion grows one wonders haplessly whether it may not be that there is nothing new left in the world to do, except possibly to go mad like some of the self-styled modernists, escape from reality as the psychologists would say.

Faced by the depressing general aspect, the only hopeful alternative is to doubt whether, after all, art is necessary. Beauty is necessary, yes! But most of this art has very tenuous claims to beauty, where it is not actually and assertively unconcerned with beauty.

The inspirations seem so banal—portraits, the inevitable portraits; small New England village scenes (without the gas pumps—ah, there is a concession to beauty that would never be made in the Independents' show!); brooks, trees, noble red men in stained glass attitudes, red New Mexico mesas, angular, garishly colored, unsailable fishing boats clustered at their wharves, American cities, and so on; you have seen them all before!

If the National Academy has any claim to a national standing—and that it has is generally conceded—our national loves are very homely. Cottages, some shrewd but uninspired faces, some very obvious landscapes, florid women and large children—can these constitute the entirety of our aesthetic experience?

If a painter should querulously demand, "What would you have me paint?"—the answer would not immediately be easy to give. True, we all like, in theory at least, simple living, women and children and nature. But we do not like them so much through the medium of distractingly mannered painting as we like them straight. Art such as we are considering lags behind reality. Certainly it does not soar nor uplift. The fact is, life can and does get along without it. There is really nothing to regret—that life gets along without this art—though it is too bad that there is so little art contained in our modern life.

Art, anthropologists tell us, is a mime. It is a dressing-up and play at life. It may be a play of life as we would like it. It is a memorialization of things loved, or a declaration of things loathed; most often it is of things loved. If we have no heroes to glorify (imagine a heroic picture of Coolidge) nor courts of love to lyricize (although our divorce courts occupy quite a bit of the prose in the newspapers) nor saints to remember, the artist may justly claim the fault is life's then, not his. The rout of a Dionysian procession gave the Greek sculptor a subject that, rendered realistically, was beautiful in his bas reliefs on the temple wall. The great Christian flowering of art had a subject deeply emotional, rich in variety and poetry and near to the core of life. Given the subway, apartment dwelling, the automobile, the office, the machine, as the outstanding components of modern life, can art mime them, dress them up, play with them, show us idealized subway riding, the epitome of the happy office scene, a tractor-mower inspiring sunburned, mirthful maidens to be thankful to be

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alive? If this is possible, the art of the Academy has not done it. It is out of the main stream, yet it points no new way, no beautiful way. The only conclusion to be drawn is that, although America has a few good artists, her national art is not happy nor inspiring; her life not beautiful, not worthy of immortalizing.

To the above general impression of the show, minor extenuations are visible on closer inspection. Robert K. Ryland has a colorful canvas of contemporary life in a flat, A Book of Verse, in the spirit of the book beneath the bough. Morning, by Antonio Cirino, shows nice feeling for a subject perennial with painters and poets. Charles S. Chapman, N. A., has a virile and interesting style in his two canvases, Pine and Rocks and Inspiration. New England Hills, by Leonard Ochtman, N. A., shows real feeling for a cold and deserted subject. Vanity, by Raymond P. R. Neilson, A. N. A., is a meticulously realistic nude, even to a small mole on the stomach. Cora Brooks's Garden by the Sea is a lovely place in which to dwell in thought as well as in fact.

Spring Showers and Sunshine, by Van D. Perrine, A. N.A., in an ultra-impressionist manner, is quite delightful except for the meaningless and unresolvable orb, like an arc light in a fog, that is out of key with the rest of the picture. Mr. Perrine's other canvas, Spring Woodlands, is an altogether charming, delightful and satisfying idyl of children at play in a sunny glade.

Twelfth Month, by Harry F. Waltman, A. N. A., is a winner of the National Arts Club prize, a snow scene, a nice another-one-of-those-things. Sun Bath, by William De Leftwich Dodge, is colorful and living, while In Vermont, by Henry Bill Selden, is well composed and serene. Jerome Myers's, (A. N. A.) two canvases, Sunday near East River and Dock Promenade, are typical of his always amusing, very human and likable style. Both are lyrics of the survival of innocence and youth even in the midst of an ominous city of Frankensteins. Pussy, by Alice Kent Stoddard, is an engaging sketch of childhood. William N. Singer, jr., A. N. A., who had a memorable show at Durand-Ruel's last winter, is represented by Winter Night, a portrayal of an eternal hill by starlight, beautifully composed, sincerely felt.

The Big Herd, winner of the Carnegie Prize, by John Noble, N. A., is an American "machine" of a herd of buffaloes coming over the plain under a sky and sun surely never seen except in a limbo for the nauseated. Winter Day, by Carl Wuermer, awarded the J. Francis Murphy Memorial Prize, is good, regular, well painted. G. Glenn Newell, A. N. A., in his Where Men Once Lived, shows us the passing New England farmhouse in a setting of unpeopled nature such as would have been sought by Thoreau or Emerson. South Dakota Evening, by Jes Schlaikjer, is strong realism, a woman and child in bleak surroundings haloed by a setting sun.

Three Women of Provincetown, by Charles W. Hawthorne, N. A., has the place of honor in the centre of the main gallery. It is a good character study of Puritan types so forbidding the picture would be at home nowhere as much as in one of those parlors of bygone days in which the best was carefully segregated and which was opened only for the laying-out of a member of the family.

Mrs. S. J. Barco, by C. Barrett-Strait, is a clever portrait of a charming woman. Eben F. Comins, in The Fireworks, presents a lively nocturne. A Mother from the Turquoise Land, by F. Luis Mora, N.A., is a really sympathetic, "felt," Indian study. Bruce Stevenson's The Fencer is a deft and characterful portraiture. The large canvas, Foster Johnson and His Family, by Wayman Adams, N. A., grows on one. It is a purposely sketchy scene of Negro domestic life. The sketchiness implies the transientness of the arrangement and mood. The depths of its rich humanity invite and bear close study.

In the room devoted to black and white, Emil Fuchs's Sea Breeze is a charming plate; Le Puy, by John Taylor Arms, is fascinating with remarkable, unstrained composition and wonderful detail; Adoration of the Shepherds and Adoration of the Magi, by Irene Weir, are naïve and likable; while three plates by Kerr Eby are technically very fine and then some—his Scout Planes at Dawn, one of his now famous war series; The Sardine Fleet, a gusty and memorable glimpse of sea, ships and fisherfolk, and finally, his Saint Ouen, Rouen, which is a solid, impressive, spiritualized, architectural rendering.

The sculpture scattered out of the way in the several galleries, seemed altogether competent and no doubt interesting to the artists and immediate friends.

In retrospect, the first impression of the show still holds. If "each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth," the present exhibition would seem to be mostly of the dying, of our passing natural frontiers sterilized from human contact, and of a chill, unloved, Puritan civilization—unloved, that is, except for the white houses against rocky hills and cold green, which come really under the passing frontier classifications. There are practically none of the rude and clashing attempts, usually spiteful, to resolve machinery, downright ugliness, cubistic cities and bulbous nudes into terms of art, such as the non-academicians in their eagerness to be of the age that is living, dash off. The non-academicians, of course, either fume or shriek with laughter at mention of the Academy. The Academy, however, is probably inured to being the butt of critics and wits. It has for over a hundred years had a way of surviving them. It has its own standards, its own likes and dislikes. It is a comfortable club for indulging in a harmless pastime and for mutual self-admiration. Possibly it is fulfilling a very useful purpose in sheltering and preserving its craft for a period in our national life when we shall have great and beautiful achievements to memorialize happily.

This Time of Year

Day shuffles in
On tired old feet
And down the path
To a garden seat,

Where he sits and shivers,
As he holds up
To the niggardly sun
An empty cup.

Or grovels about
In the leaves and dust
For a copper coin,
A moldy crust.

Blue-cold at dark
And hunger-thin,
Day shuffles out
As he shuffled in.

ETHEL ROMIG FULLER.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Wings over Europe

SUPPOSE we say at the outset that Wings over Europe, by Robert Nichols and Maurice Browne, is one of the most stimulating, provocative and often thrilling plays that New York has seen in many tedious months; this in spite of the fact that there is not even one woman in the cast, and that the entire action takes place in the Cabinet Room of the British empire, at 10 Downing Street. It is a play replete with two qualities that are seldom found together—abstract thought and exciting melodrama. Its production brings new distinction to the Theatre Guild.

Having said this, we can go on to discuss the play and its several startling weaknesses without giving a false impression as to the total effect of this brilliant experiment. The story is simple enough. Francis Lightfoot, a young scientific genius and a nephew of the Prime Minister, has discovered the secret of atomic energy. This knowledge has enabled him to construct a mechanism capable, let us say, of performing so minor a feat as changing wood into gold, or so major an operation as the shattering and disintegration of the entire world. The play-writing and production are so well handled that this astounding situation is made utterly believable. At least for the duration of the play, you remain convinced that Lightfoot has done the impossible, and that all that ensues from his discovery is logical, inevitable and terrifying. On no point does this play deserve higher praise than on its successful creation of this primary feeling of illusion.

What then happens is the world-old conflict between irresponsible genius and human inertia. The authors let it be known frankly that they are reviving the old Prometheus legend in modern form—the chaining of that creature, be he man or demigod, who dares to bring a greater knowledge of good and evil to mankind. Lightfoot, having first convinced his uncle and Evelyn Arthur, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, that he is sane, and that his discovery is no imposture, the Prime Minister calls a special meeting of the Cabinet to permit Lightfoot to lay the matter before the government. Obviously a power such as Lightfoot controls could make any government master of the world. It would also change all existing values in the world. Gold would no longer be the basis of finance, since any substance could be changed into gold at will. Existing codes of law would be useless, since even the nature of man himself could be changed. War would cease, since man, at one stroke, could annihilate the world.

Lightfoot, however, thinks of himself as a ministering angel. He will not tolerate the notion that his discovery should be used for selfish national purposes. It must be given to all mankind alike—in his belief that man, once having the power to destroy himself, will no longer dare to be selfish. With power equal as between all men, no one man nor group of men will have the upper hand. The inherent goodness of man will then shine forth, and men, raised to the power of gods, will create a new and sublime universe. Needless to say, this idea finds but a cold and horrified reception in the British Cabinet. It is attacked from every angle: by the War Minister as an absurd abdication of British power, by the Naval Secretary as an attack on British control of the seas, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a blow at world financial security, by Evelyn Arthur and the Prime Minister on far deeper philosophical grounds. Lightfoot becomes so disgusted with what seems to him the narrow vision and stupid inertia of the Cabinet, that at last he threatens to blow up the whole world at a given hour, so that nature can have done with her failure on earth and start a new experiment in some other universe. No matter how fantastic this may sound in print, remember that in the play it holds as a real possibility, a stupefying menace, and the source of as stirring a melodramatic situation as you could hope to find. I have never seen the art of theatrical illusion so perfectly exemplified as in the atmosphere of reality created around these impossible moments snatched from an impossible future.

Where the play breaks down is in its last few minutes. By the middle of the third act, an almost cosmic feeling has been created. The British empire and its Cabinet have become merely a symbol of the ways of mankind. Lightfoot has become an angel of destruction, ready to blot out an iniquitous world. Then, at one fatal stroke, the illusion is broken. The Minister of War shoots Lightfoot, as it were, in world self-defense. His instrument of control is found on his person, hidden in the mechanism of a watch. News comes that scientists in other lands are working toward the same discovery. Britain is invited to join a world conference at Geneva to draw up a program for control of the new forces. Airplanes with "atomic bombs" fly over London. The play suddenly becomes a matter of concrete time and place, loses its impact of universality, and crashes into a dramatic dust-heap. The real curtain should come with the death of Lightfoot. All that takes place after that is petty stuff and unspeakable anticlimax.

In fact, the authors at no time really penetrate the essence of the problem. They establish an amazing half-premise, and manufacture an arbitrary conclusion. But they supply no middle term. And this, I believe, is typical of so much in modern thought that passes for wisdom and insight. Lightfoot has some sort of vision of a new race of god-men. But he gives no indication of how his discovery could be applied, of whether the control over matter should rest with governments, with a council of the whole world, or be handed over to all men as individuals. Apparently he starts with the idea that mankind has been dominated by fear of matter. His discovery makes man the master of matter. But where, then, does consciousness rest, or the will that is to control the new mastery? He not only gives no answer to this; he does not even raise the question, although it is instantly obvious and fundamental. Is there a spiritual essence distinct from matter but, up to now, operating through it and conditioned by it in its perceptions? Or is man himself merely matter, a victim of magnetic and other forces, and himself a part of them? The authors beg the question completely, and it is precisely because they do beg it that the play ends in dramatic disaster.

In other words, the authors have plunged headlong into what is actually the problem of the knowledge of good and evil—the paradox of forces, spiritual and material, which can be used for both creation and destruction. They try to settle this gigantic problem in the short spaces and narrow confines of a play, and to do so without ever assuming what it is that can exercise the newly discovered power. If they sided with Dr. Watson, and assumed that man himself is merely matter, that would indicate one course. If they decided that man is

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a separable union of matter and spiritual essence (soul) that would indicate a totally different course. But they do not decide. They do not even indicate that there is a decision to be made. It is somewhat as if a ship's captain, finding himself for the first time in control of the power of steam, were to say, "Now I can disregard the winds and sail anywhere," but were never to make up his mind where to sail; or, even more accurately, were to forget the possibility of sailing anywhere at all and steam forever in a meaningless circle. In other words, this play is provocative, it is dramatically exciting, it makes all things seem possible; but the subject itself proved too big for its authors and so led them to an improvised, unworthy and rather silly conclusion. It is a splendid example of how modern thought checkmates itself by mistaking premises for conclusions, or, still more frequently, by forgetting to define a premise at all, and so making a conclusion impossible. Such "thinkers" should have profound sympathy with the Mad Hatter—for there is surely no reason why the "very best butter" shouldn't be the very best thing for a watch, unless you decide first that no kind of butter agrees with any kind of watch. A careful rereading of Alice in Wonderland would have been a good advance discipline for the authors of Wings over Europe.

The most interesting aspect of this play, however, aside from its generally muddled thinking and disastrous last curtain, is the dramatic power and interest it sustains for two acts and a half. Theatrically it is as effective as the best murder mystery, and vastly more stimulating. This is due not only to excellent writing and well-manufactured suspense, but to acute characterization, exceptional acting and very fine directing and staging. Rouben Mamoulian (the director of Porgy) is responsible for giving an amazing life and movement to what might have been intensely dull scenes at the big Cabinet table. Occasionally the efforts to create rhythm by slow movement become a little too obvious, but they are effective even when you see the machinery working, and that, perhaps, is the only fair test of excellence.

The various parts are, without exception, well acted. They ring true emotionally, and never descend, as they might easily have done in inexpert hands, into Shavian burlesque figures. The various Cabinet members, with their intensely individual reactions, remain at once persons and symbols of viewpoint—a difficult combination to achieve. The most spectacular performance is, of course, that of young Alexander Kirkland as Francis Lightfoot. It is an exceedingly hard part to carry through, demanding at one time exalted declamation and, at another, boyish petulance and the eccentricity of genius, and Mr. Kirkland weaves it into a surprising unity. But several other performances merit real praise, among them Ernest Lawford as the intellectual Prime Minister, Frank Conroy as the almost sinister Evelyn Arthur, Hugh Beckler as Secretary of War and Grant Stewart as First Lord of the Admiralty. John Dunn as the sporting Lord Privy Seal creates a character of admirable distinctness. The setting, by Raymond Sovey, is a masterpiece of atmosphere. (At the Martin Beck Theatre.)

Snow

The universe is joined as one;
Pools and wells are opening holes;
Colored dogs are white dogs now,
And white dogs are growing bigger and bigger.

Translated from the Chinese by
WITTER BYNNER *and* KIANG KANG-HU.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE CHURCH AND THE NEGRO

St. Paul, Minn.

TO the Editor:—In the prefatory note to Mr. Aswell's The Church and the Negro, the editor of The Commonweal declared that one purpose of the article was to promote discussion. The article should serve that purpose admirably. It is bristlingly provocative. It raises a series of extremely fundamental questions. Let us enumerate a few of them: Must the Church be content with ministering to the spiritual needs of the individual, especially the oppressed individual, or is she authorized, and even obliged at times, to determine publicly the moral character of social abuses? May the Christians who accept the Aristotelian theory of the organization of the state regard the colored group as the natural slaves? What is the connection between the moral vices of an oppressed group and the social history and the social environment of that group? Do the data of modern psychology and modern sociology prove that the Negro is mentally and morally inferior to the white man? If that article provokes a sober and unbiased discussion of these problems The Commonweal will have rendered valiant service both to religion and to the nation.

In his hope that the conversion of the Negro to Catholicism will furnish the solution to the vexing race problem, Mr. Aswell is most probably destined to be disappointed. Although the Catholicizing of the Negro may contribute much toward *a* solution, it will not be *the* solution which the distinguished writer expects. Mr. Aswell believes the Negro to be a low-grade moron by nature, an alien to the restraints of civilization. He is convinced that the Negro in America can become nothing more than a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. He thinks that the race problem will be solved when the Negro accepts that doctrine and foregoes permanently all attempts to secure economic and educational opportunities equal to those given to the whites. Furthermore, he hopes that Catholicism will be the palliative which will induce the Negro not only to resign himself to the uncontrollable inequalities of this generation but also to suppress in his children every spark of dissatisfaction and ambition. Mr. Aswell has patronized the wrong Church. Catholicism is not that type of a palliative.

There are two indications of the fruitlessness of the hope of Mr. Aswell. The first is empirical. It is founded upon the existing attitude of the Negroes who have accepted Catholicism and who are endowed with the gifts of leadership. The Catholic Negroes of that type have been vehement in their objections to existing conditions. They constitute a small but vigorous minority which is persistently petitioning the Church authorities in regard to discriminations and ecclesiastical indifference to social wrong.

The second proof is the nature of the teaching of the Catholic Church. The Church stresses fraternal charity, confidence in God, and resignation to uncontrollable evils. The individual upon whom the shadow of sorrow has fallen is consoled in the Church by the memento that man has not here a lasting resting-place. The Church also warns against despair and hatred against God. But the Church has not advised any nation or race to forfeit all hope of securing equal opportunities and of correcting social wrongs. The Irish were not instructed by their Church to suppress all craving and dreaming for national independence, although many influential Catholics in England thought that the Celts lacked an aptitude for self-government. Neither will the Negroes who accept Catho-

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licism be taught to stifle the ambition to secure for their children equal opportunities, even though many white Catholics regard the colored members of the Church as children.

However, the achievement of a Christian and a permanent solution of the race problem would undoubtedly be hastened by the conversion of the colored race in the United States. But that solution will not resemble the disposition of the race problem which Mr. Aswell expects.

A portion of the white man's prejudice against the Negro is occasioned by the wide prevalence of moral vices among the colored group. The Church would strive to destroy that prejudice by eradicating the vices. Catholicism would replace the illiterate parson with a priest who had been taught to act prudently. He would urge his flock to bridle their ambition with good sense and patience and perseverance. Catholicism, by emphasizing insistently the inviolability of the marriage bond, would reconstruct the home among the colored group and thus guarantee to the colored people the only school in which true virtue may be acquired. Catholicism would endeavor to destroy idleness by encouraging vocational training and by protesting against economic discriminations. Catholicism would struggle to conquer indolence by cultivating in the Negro's heart self-respect, and by placing the Negro priest on the altar at the side of the white priest.

If the colored group in the United States were converted to Catholicism, their character and mental habits would most probably be gradually transformed. And toward the "new Negro" the product of the moral transformation, the white race would be forced to assume a different attitude in regard to economic, educational, and political opportunities.

Rev. Francis J. Gilligan,
Saint Paul's Seminary.

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editor:—As a Southerner always interested in the race question, with the keenest sympathy for the Negro and a real affection, such as I believe only a Southerner can feel for many of the old-time servitors, I must admit that I agree almost wholly with what Mr. Edward Campbell Aswell has to say about the Church and the Negro. His advice about taking into account the attitude of the Protestant whites is sound, and they are wise who heed it.

I think we Catholics agree with Mr. Aswell when he says: "I believe the Catholic Church can bring to the Negro that which no other institution in the world can give him. The magnificent ceremonials of the Church will appeal to his dramatic instincts; as time goes on, the teachings of the Church will bring him that satisfaction which will keep him loyal to his conversion." Moreover I agree wholly when he says: ". . . The Catholic Church is the ideal instrument—and as it seems to me, the only instrument—that can solve the race problem in the South." Given an opportunity, the Church *can* bring about that reconciliation in the Negro's soul Mr. Aswell thinks essential for his happines, and without doubt this would be a prime factor in the solution of the South's social problem. But that phrase "given an opportunity" say a great deal. Thus far, very little has been done to acquaint the white people of the South with the true nature of the Church. The Catholic Church as they know her does not exist: to some she is a formless monstrosity; to others, merely an arrogant plutocracy. They have never visualized Her as that "city, ever ancient, ever new," the Bride coming down from heaven. Probably there are hundreds of thousands of people in the South who have never come in contact with the sisters or priests—in fact, there are in the Southern Appalachians at least 2,000,000 children of school age, few of whom have seen a Catholic priest. In the small towns we have about the same condition. And, unfortunately, the Catholic laity who come into such places are too often only nominal Catholics, and I am sorry to say that such people have done more harm to the Church in the South than all other causes combined. Never having come in touch with practical Catholics, they naturally are inclined to consider all Catholics as below their standard of morality, which in some respects is very stern.

There is also in the South, as elsewhere, a class that is intolerant on principle. They call themselves 100 percent Americans, and seem to delight in being cruel to those they try to consider beneath them, the Negro and the emigrant—and I might add, the Catholic. In the South, these people are for the most part descendant of what was known before the war as the "tenant class," or "po' white trash," or "Po' buckras," to quote the Negroes, who considered themselves as infinitely their superiors. The word "tenant" must not mislead. Not all tenants were, or are, of the "tenant class." These latter are marked by their attitude of intolerance, their suspicious and narrow mentality, a result, perhaps, of their inheritance of inferiority. Being numerous, they have acquired a kind of political significance in certain localities. Today, many of them are much better off materially than are the descendants of the slave owners, or southern "quality." The Ku Klux Klans of the South are made up chiefly of this class of people. Many of them become preachers of the various sects, and let me add that there is as vast a difference between preacher and minister as there is between class and class. From this class the missionary cannot expect much sympathy.

But if those others, the lineal descendants of the best families of the South and its leaders, can be made to see the true objective of the missionary in seeking to convert the Negro, they will be likely to lend sympathetic aid to that end. For these men are the Negro's best friends. The missionary should remember this fact. If he thinks the Negro's road has been a hard one, let him remember that the path of the southern gentleman has been strewn with sharper thorns. Had it not been for the abominable reconstruction methods, there would have been much less Negro problem in the South than there has been and is. Booker Washington realized that these men are the Negro's friends. Those who go into the South to convert the Negro should disabuse their minds of the supposition that the South persecutes that race. Otherwise they will accomplish much less than they might expect, and they may fail signally.

The Fathers of the Divine Word are doing a great work in Mississippi. They conduct Saint Augustine's College and Seminary for Negroes alone. They have at present six men preparing for the priesthood, two of whom have taken the vows of the society. But they are terribly hampered for lack of funds. Those who are interested in the Negro could not do better than help to support this institution. It is preparing leaders where they are needed.

M. C.

Ridge, Md.

TO the Editor:—In the November 21 issue of The Commonweal there appeared an article on The Church and the Negro on which I should like to comment. I usually agree with the opinions in your periodical, but I must say that you

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were most unfair in presenting the article to which I have referred.

I belong to an inferior race. Not only do I admit this, but I am willing to take issue immediately with anyone who presumes to argue the point. You will notice that I have not named the gentleman writing the article. I haven't because I can't. Another educated colored woman came in to see me yesterday, and while she was waiting for me, she picked up The Commonweal and glanced over it. When I arrived she was very much upset, and when she went back to Washington, The Commonweal went with her. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if she attempted to answer the gentleman from the South. What greater evidence of inferiority could anyone possibly ask? She doesn't even know the limits of her own mind.

Right here a confession is in order. Six months ago, I didn't know the limits of *my* mind. But I know them now! Six months ago, I should have had the temerity to say that, given the same opportunity and environment, a Negro could achieve just what any other person could achieve. But for the past six months I have been growing more and more humble. Even the illustrious author of the amazing article on the Church and the Negro could find no fault with me if he tried. I have found the place beyond which no Negro may hope to pass. I know my place. The barrier is logic. Under many different situations, in some of which I was personally interested, and in others where I was only a casual observer, I have watched the great, the semi-great, the near-great and the would-be-great of the opposite group perform feats of mental gymnastics which were as far beyond the realms of logic as the stars at the end of the longest light rays are from us poor mortals here on earth. I tried to apply a little logic to lubricate the machinery, in a vain attempt to trail along behind fearful and wonderful arguments and contradictions great and small, but it was no use. Two or three weeks ago, the Literary Digest carried a most interesting article on friction. Among the illustrations was a picture of a tremendous turbine, which required 100 barrels of oil a day for lubrication. But it really was lubricated. My trouble was that I had the wrong lubricating agent. The more I applied, the hotter the engine became. No amount, from 100 barrels down, did any good.

One day, when friction had burned out nearly all my bearings and reduced my engine to the place where she would hardly turn over, the solution came to me like a flash. All that I needed was a few barrels of a good heavy grade of illogicality. For awhile I felt cheered. I began going through my inventory of supplies, hoping to find an odd barrel or two. I found one or two empties from my younger days, but the supply was totally inadequate. It was then that I sat down and faced the music. I tried to "find a way out," emulating the distinguished Dr. Robert Moton, and I tried to find a way in, emulating yeggmen, social climbers and other pernicious members of society. Eventually, I arrived at the heart-breaking conclusion that I was just plain inferior. My mind went along a fairly straight road. It wasn't capable of being educated to play leap-frog, battledore and shuttlecock and modern football, all at the same time. As the author of the article on The Church and the Negro said, our position of inferiority is permanent. Personally, I am resigned. More than that, as I said in the beginning, I think that Mr. Williams knew of this inferiority when he invited answers to the article, which wasn't fair at all. But as for any member of my race who is indiscreet enough to attempt an answer to such superb illogicality, all that I can say for him is that he has descended past inferiority. He is just plain dumb.

But in defense of my inferior group, I want to say that I met another gentleman from the South, the other day. I think possibly his environment has preyed on his mind, or worse yet, the Church itself cannot compete with a true dyed-in-the-wool representative of racial purity. This reverend gentleman (he was a Roman Catholic priest) held views almost as inferior as those of the average educated Negro, in some cases more inferior. Nevertheless, he is doing the best he can under the circumstances, with the inherent drawbacks of a logical mind. And in the event of criticism, he can always tell other folks what he told me: his pa was a Kluxie!

CONSTANCE E. H. DANIEL,
Cardinal Gibbons Institute.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—There is much that is debatable in the first part of Mr. Aswell's article, The Church and the Negro, in the November 21 issue of The Commonweal, but I will pass that over and speak only of what I really know about conditions among the Negroes of Maryland and Virginia. Mr. Aswell is mistaken when he says, "During the days of slavery Negroes attended the same church with their masters." This was the case in Maryland among Negroes belonging to Catholic families, but was not the case either in that state or in Virginia among those whose masters belonged to the Episcopal Church. In the small Virginia town where my mother lived before the Civil War, no Negro was ever known to enter the Episcopal Church except to clean it, the Negro population both then and later belonged to the Baptist and Methodist communions, this being true also of Maryland except for those Negro Catholics who had remained faithful to the religion of their slave ancestors, and a fair number of converts to the Catholic Church. The Negroes had as ministers men of their own race who had "felt the call."

From a long and intimate acquaintance with Negroes of all grades of intelligence I can emphatically assure Mr. Aswell that the Negro's religion is not "a tissue of half-remembered African superstitions dramatized in the persons of the Hebrew prophets," but a very sincere belief in the fundamentals of Christianity, as all those who have gained their confidence well know. Their religion concerns itself with everyday matters of conduct and right living, and is above all their consolation and strength in time of affliction, enabling them to bear their trials with true Christian fortitude.

Instead of being a perpetual menace to society, as Mr. Aswell asserts, the great majority of the ten or twelve million Negroes in America are doing their share toward the development of the country. In many parts of Maryland and Virginia they are small farm owners or tenant farmers, some of their children go to the cities and become well-paid and trusted domestic servants. The more ambitious become lawyers, doctors, teachers. Remove all the colored workers from our economic life and see how they would be missed.

To use the Catholic Church, as Mr. Aswell seems to suggest, as an instrument to "keep the Negro in his place" is repugnant to all true Catholics, it would be consenting to the philosophy of the Russian Communists that religion is the anodyne of the people. Far from making this the motive, we should try to bring the Negro into the Church because only in it will he realize to the full both spiritual life and the fundamental strength that develops into good citizenship.

MARY F. MCMULLEN.

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BOOKS

Two Views of the East

The Soul of China, by Richard Wilhelm. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

The Soul of the East, by Rabbi Ehrenpreis. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

BOTH of these authors should be read, but not for the same reason. Rabbi Ehrenpreis has had a wide education due to his calling as a Rabbi. He has served in Austria, in Bulgaria, in Sweden, in an official capacity of his creed, and traveled widely in Europe, and to some extent in the near East. It is the near East of which he writes and does so entertainingly and with much insight, of the Arabs, the Syrians and the Jewish movement, which has as its ultimate aim the recreation of a Jewish homeland.

His chapter upon Saloniki, as a growing centre of Sephardic Jew culture, is extremely interesting, not only for the description but also for the indications as to how this faith, and the habits it induces, is tending to alter the working week to the Jewish week. His description of the Sephardim Settlement raises the question as to whether Greece will pause and understand the peculiar genius of the Jews as traders and bankers, and allow these considerable latitude, or work for another diaspora, in the interests of those Asiatic Greeks who returned in great numbers to Greece after the destruction of Smyrna. It is to be hoped that Dr. Ehrenpreis will turn his mind to a volume upon the history of the two Jewish movements, the Sephardim and the Askenazim, giving a detailed statement of these and of the expulsion of the former from the Iberian Peninsula, together with some account of the effect which this had on the commercial life of Portugal and Spain.

Dr. Wilhelm writes of the extreme Orient. Thus readers of these two volumes will be enabled to envisage the unrest sweeping through Asia, in its religious, its spiritual and economic aspects. Both authors draw attention to the faults and blunders of the western educators, the western commercial representatives, which seem to be of the same class whether recorded as having happened as cases, or as incidents, in the Levantine area or along the Pacific coast. But Dr. Wilhelm writes as a cultured German professor who has spent much of his life in China, Korea, Manchuria, part of the time as a professor at Pekin National University, part as an official of the German embassy in China. It does not appear that Dr. Ehrenpreis is an oriental linguist of living languages as is Dr. Wilhelm. The knowledge of Chinese opens wide the rich stores of Chinese literature, art, morals, history. Thus his book is one based on first-hand knowledge, not the mere compilation based on another's research, or upon inquiries made through an interpreter.

His book has twenty chapters, each interesting, but those dealing with The Cave Temples of Yün-Kang, The Missionaries of China, The Web of Life, are absorbing, bringing out the main thesis of the volume, that the soul of China is in evolution, and that, though revolution is tearing down dynasties and disintegrating political parties, there is still present in the Chinese family, the Chinese clan, that calmness of demeanor and intellect, that gentleness of manner and method, displaying the steady character which has weathered so many revolutions and political storms, is still unchanged, and will in all probability hold the state and the people on an equally steady course of reform.

It is too often overlooked that what appears new is seldom created of its own accord. The tree still comes from the seed, and the seeds of China's greatness lie in its past history and achievements. The picture of national vitality portrayed in these two volumes is arresting, because it is a picture of national vitality in the near East and the far East at the same stage of world history. Each of these two areas, through their people and government, is raising the question—what inherent right has the European civilization to control our destiny? This question echoes from the Levantine coast to the Pacific Ocean—only knowledge of these Asiatic people and their habits, ambitions, arts, can bring understanding of the problems of Asia. Indifference is ever the foe of progress.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

Social Action

Justice First, by John A. Lapp. New York: The Century Company. $2.25.

THE essays in this volume selected mainly from the 150 speeches delivered throughout the country by Dr. Lapp in 1927, as president of the National Conference of Social Work, call sharply to attention all men who have an interest in the common welfare. Not since 1912—the year of a minority report on industrial problems—have the members of that Conference had brought before them so many and such stirring messages on our common responsibility for social disasters. Sickness, old age, unprotected children, unemployment, the friendless immigrant among us—these and similar social evils are preventable, not through individual effort alone, but through social planning and achievement. This is the motif of the book, and it deals with the extent of social misery, the intensity of this suffering, the devastation of human life and character which is its companion. Measures of prevention through social action are the means Dr. Lapp believes will bring about a more equitable social order.

The author has for many years been familiar with the dark byways of social injustice. His experience in directing studies on health insurance, vocational education and the needs of diocesan charities has given him intimate knowledge of those who dwell in the shadow of poverty. The essays draw sharp and vivid pictures, and they urge in behalf of those who suffer injustice that type of social action described by the great Leo: "Justice demands that the interests of the poorer classes should be carefully watched over by the administration. . . . Whatever should appear to prove to be conducive to the well-being of those who work should receive favorable consideration. Let it not be feared that solicitude of this kind will be harmful to any interest. On the contrary it will be to the advantage of all, for it cannot but be good for the commonwealth to shield from misery those on whom it so largely depends."

In the chapters, Why Are There Poor?, Old Age Security, Health Insurance, the writer has banked the facts about the magnitude of our major social problems. Between four million and five million people in these United States received partial or complete support through public and private agencies in 1926. Unorganized and individual relief is incalculable. Over a million and a quarter people spent some time in an institution for dependents, defectives or delinquents; approximately the same number were sick and absent from work for more than two months. The number suffering from industrial and personal accidents is unknown, though it is many thousands. For a half-million of our children parents were unable or unwilling to care, and this army was supported by public or private charities. One hundred thousand were buried by

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charity, and "fully twelve million of our people suffer every year from poverty or its near approach." The span of life has been increased in the past two decades through better health service. But in the shadow there is the terrifying fact of increasing industrial insecurity beyond fifty-five. Private benevolence and pensions for public service care for only a fraction of the dependent aged.

What to do about these human tragedies? The answer is given in part in the author's profession of faith in the program for social insurance, and in part in the chapters which summarize his social philosophy, notably Social Workers and Social Problems, Are Social Conditions Improving?, and Why We Organize, the latter delivered first at an annual meeting of the National Council of Catholic Women. In them is a discussion of the methods of organization for the betterment of our common welfare, a plea for better social engineering. The church and state have separate spheres of responsibility. Individuals organize instinctively for social, political, professional, economic or other reasons because they cannot attain their goals alone. Results from socially desirable organization must come through education, social understanding and social action.

Dr. Lapp sees the passing of leadership from the older professions to the youngest among them—social work. The daily contact of social workers with every condition of living leads them to knowledge and understanding of human suffering. He urges them to make greater public use of this knowledge and to become more active agents in social reform. Too long have they been largely a "salvage corps." But progress has been notable in establishing better standards of care through public agencies, in the extension of social insurance, in preventive work, in defining the social and ethical doctrine of the living wage, and in better correlation of all social work.

He debunks the self-interest propaganda against taxes and governmental protection of the weak, and those careless inferences from social statistics which are made when incomplete information is unobtainable. The general state of mind regarding taxes falls far short of understanding that they are for the benefit of all, not the few. They will increase in those communities which recognize the claims of social justice. As for statistics, we have comparable data on which to base many of our conclusions about the reduction of death rates and the increase in the span of life. We have not comparable data to justify any present conclusion on the increase or decrease of mental disease from the number of people cared for in our hospitals for mental cases and defectives. The facts about the reduction of the number of almshouses should give pause to hasty conclusions on the decrease of old-age dependency before the fact of the improvement in non-institutional standards of care for the aged.

"Charity," says Dr. Lapp, "is the complement of justice. When justice cannot be attained or when its power is exhausted, charity steps in to minister to the fallen, to encourage the despairing and to fulfill the Divine command. As justice advances, the need for charity grows less; but as such need lessens, the growing spirit of love finds new and larger means of expression. . . . Energized by the spirit of charity, let justice be for all time the pole-star for the aspirations of the human race." Discussions of the relative claims of mercy and justice had life in the days before the case work program for improving conditions of living realized its essential dependence on social action. That they have no significance now may indicate some progress in diminishing our "excessive individualism" and a more prevailing vision of greater balance on social values.

Rose J. McHugh.

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Catalogue of the Classical Spirit

The Life and Death of an Ideal, by A. L. Guérard. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $4.50.

MR. GUÉRARD portrays for us the rise and fall of the "classical spirit." He sees it as a spiritual current underlying the French philosophy, literature and history of four centuries, meandering capriciously, but ever present. An ambitious attempt, this effort at explaining 400 years of evolution in the light of an abstract—and somewhat arbitrary—principle. It called, in the reviewer's opinion, for more original comment and discussion. As it is, Mr. Guérard merely punctuates his discourse now and then with dogmatic banalities which leave one rather frustrated, and which are, to say the least, inadequate, considering the scope of the enterprise. He selects a grown-up subject, and then adopts the primer manner; one resents being treated, at every page, to such heavy truisms as one might expect to find in a simplified history of France for the use of the youthful.

The book, on the whole, gives the impression of a very complete catalogue. The author is dealing with flesh and blood, and yet the general effect is that of still life. One would have preferred a less complete enumeration of facts, and more relief given to significant events and personalities. As it is, one is made to race through decades at breakneck speed, without being allowed to step back and look at the general perspective. Four whole centuries pass before one like the walls of a subway, with the result that everything and everybody seems on the same scale.

This excess of details and the academic tone of the book make for arduous reading. There is too much quoting, too many unnecessary allusions, too much exhibition of irrelevant knowledge. One does not question Mr. Guérard's erudition, but one does resent pedantry.

One is disappointed, knowing something of the author's other works, in The Life and Death of an Ideal. The title had led one to expect something more stirring. As a reference book its value is unquestionable, but its appeal to the lay reader seems dubious.

MIREILLE HOLLARD.

Cataclysm

The Age of Reason, by Philip Gibbs. New York: Doubleday Doran and Company. $2.50.

THE title is ironic; for Philip Gibbs, in this study of the effect of modern "scientific" thought on social life, presents us with a picture that is appalling, and yet sufficiently arresting to prove his realism valid.

Professor Hesketh Jerningham, eminent scientist, and "the greatest brain in Oxford," marries one of his students, Margaret Allport, daughter of a canon—a charming girl, endowed with all attractions save intellect, and all the virtues save decisiveness of character. Jerningham is a widower with two grown children, Cyril and Viola, scarcely younger than Margaret, and thoroughly imbued with their father's naturalistic principles—principles which he has formulated into a religion "something like Christianity, without God," and which rejects traditional Christianity as a "hodgepodge of worn-out myths with which the churches try to dupe the modern mind." Margaret, to whom science is a hieroglyph, and love and religion the natural poles of being, finds herself, in this alien atmosphere, bewildered and disheartened. Faith is shaken, love shrivels, and even loyalty falters. Viola, clever and conscienceless, a pagan in

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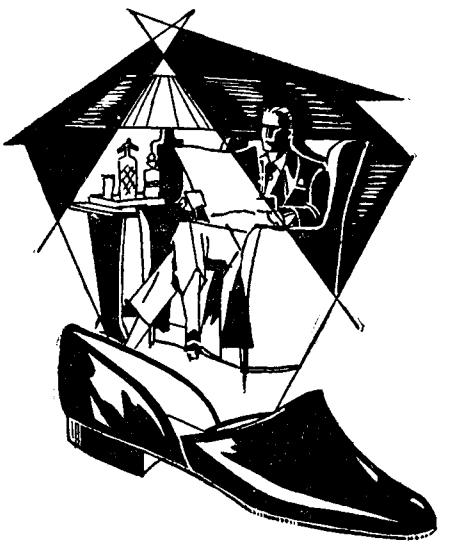

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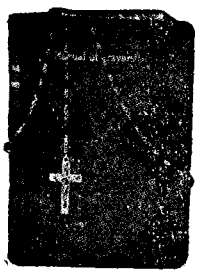

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every fibre of her being, draws into her toils and destroys the sensitive, beauty-loving soul of Guy, Margaret's well-loved brother; Cyril, wavering between complete scepticism and the first glimmerings of belief, selfishly precipitates a situation which makes life intolerable for Margaret; and the attempted rejuvenation of her father-in-law adds a note of horror which is both grotesque and sordid. And through it all, Margaret can find no one to turn to. Her father's urbane compromise with the forces of unbelief offers no solution; Guy is lost to her; and though she feels in Richard Halliday the spiritual determination which she lacks, she cannot quite compass the standard of which his life is so triumphant an embodiment.

The background is excellently done, at least in the earlier portion of the work. As in Heirs Apparent, the author has given us, in its surface aspects, a lightly sketched but vivid picture of Oxford undergraduate life. But, in their departure from Oxford, a more ominous cloud hangs over Margaret and Hesketh than over Audrey and Julian, setting forth with foolhardy and adventurous innocence.

The book is frank—perhaps unnecessarily frank: it presents us with a situation, and a household comparable in ultra-realism to anything in Russian literature or recent French fiction of the Julian Greene type: moral pandemonium reigns. Never unsympathetic to the fearlessness of modern youth, ready to concede to it surprising qualities of valor and honesty, Gibbs has found that these qualities are tragically insufficient against the disruptive forces of present-day unbelief. Faith alone solves the enigma: but in this cataclysm, it is only the sons of God who may look up and lift up their heads: for with faith the world has lost touch.

ELEANOR DOWNING.

Pulpits in Purple

Catholic Preachers of Today. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.25.

VERILY the color of clerical eloquence is purple and Ignatian black if one is to count heads alone. Here is a collection of eighteen discourses offered as a volume of sermons by prominent Catholic preachers of England, America, Australia, Ireland and South Africa. Among the eighteen there are three cardinals—their Eminences of Westminster, Boston, and New York. There are four other purpurati, one of them being a Jesuit archbishop. There are eight Jesuits among these eighteen preachers, one Passionist and one Dominican. Two members of the unpurpled diocesan clergy are admitted: one is the distinguished convert Father Ronald Knox, and the other is Vice-Rector Downey, Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Upholland College.

The reader might fairly ask whether this is a representative collection of the best preachers using the English language in our day. But observe it is not offered as a collection of the best, but only a volume of sermons by prominent preachers. The reader might further ask how high is the standard attained by most of these pulpit orators, and the answer must be, distinctly high and fine in almost every case. Cardinal O'Connell is especially excellent and so is Bishop Burton of Clifton, England. Cardinal Hayes is characteristically pastoral and conservative. All of the other preachers—is there an unknown padre among them?—manifest their usual characteristics and merits. Many of the discourses were delivered on notable occasions and the variety of subjects is great. All in all, I think it is as good a group of sermons as I have found in a single volume from different hands. There is no indication as to who

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is responsible for the selection of the preachers or the sermons. Besides those named above, the contributors are: Archbishop Goodier, Monsignors Howlett and Kolbe, Fathers Martindale, Woodlock, Kane (the beloved "Blind Orator") Boylan, Lockington, Bampton and Day—all Jesuits; Fathers Pius Carolan, C.P. and Hugh Pope, O.P. Cardinal Bourne, asked to supply an introduction, wisely offered the opening sermon instead.

JOHN CAVANAUGH.

Democracy Made Interesting

The Story of the Democratic Party, by Henry Minor. New York: The Macmillan Company. $4.50.

AFTER all, the campaign of 1928 was not perfectly novel. In 1828, Mr. Minor tells us, there was a whispering campaign; "vile and utterly improbable charges were made against Adams, while the Adams forces attacked the character of Mrs. Jackson, a good and particularly devout woman, whose age alone should have protected her." And thirty-two years earlier Fisher Ames, "justly rated as one of the ablest and soundest and most representative of New England statesmen," told his audience he could hear, if Jefferson were elected, "the clank of chains and whispers of assassins, the barbarous rage and triumph in the yell of infuriated mobs," and even "smelled the loathsome steam of human victims offered in sacrifice." That is a step beyond what any orator in the late campaign went in telling the cross-roads what would happen if the Tammany demons and the papal hordes should get in power.

This is really one of the best political histories this reviewer has ever read. It does not try, in the prevailing fashion, to be smart, but in the old sense, the best sense, it is well written, interestingly written. It is almost a political history of the United States, though its amply covered theme is the Democratic party. There are errors of fact in it, but none of them is in the least important. It is written with as nearly perfect fairness as any man can show in writing a party history, for one must deny outright that the pretentious professorial histories from the colleges are impartial in the least.

In this short space there is no chance to review it. All that can be done is to assure the reader that it is the best party history, and one of the best American political histories, ever written, and that it is highly readable, unless you are one of those to whom politics is a lifelong enigma.

CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON.

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Briefer Mention

Strangers of Rome, by Isabel C. Clarke. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

JEAN and Enid Shirley spend some months in Rome in the palace of the Duke and Duchess of Roccasecca, with curiously different effects upon their respective lives. Jean is influenced by the saintly Duchess to bcome a Catholic; forfeits a fortune, under her father's will, by doing so; marries obscurely; and emerges, after a long and honorable struggle with circumstances, as the happy, whole, fulfilled type of wife and mother. Enid has an illicit affair with the Duke; abandons their son; marries in England; and goes unhappily forward toward the tragic dénouement which the years have prepared for her, in the love of that abandoned son, grown to manhood, for her legitimate daughter, Persis: a love which she must destroy by making full confession. One feels—not for the first time in a novel of Miss Clarke's—that one would welcome some lightening ray of humor or playfulness upon all this stern landscape of duty and destiny. But, in compensation, she exhibits qualities on which we have learned to count: the illumined integrity of moral doctrine, a real power to interest by presenting contrasting types, and a real skill in promoting suspense by a carefully built up dramatic climax.

The Best Poems of 1928, selected by Thomas Moult. London: Jonathan Cape. 6s.

ANTHOLOGIES of the future, one may predict with relative confidence, will be based upon the yearly selections of Mr. Moult. Since 1922 this quiet and discerning Englishman has culled from magazines enough poems to fill a trim annual volume for the Christmas shopper. Doubtless he does overlook some good things, but the important point is that the things he finds are good. Not indifferent to modernity, he retains a fondness for more tranquil and reflective melodies. Whether the "harvest of 1928" compares favorably with the product of other years is a good topic for speculation. There are certainly some fine lyrics—Davies's The Time of Dreams, Humbert Wolfe's Dirge for Alan Keith, F. R. Higgins's The Scribe, Shaemas O'Sheel's This Is Our Doom. Two Commonweal poems are included. Elizabeth Coatsworth's Now Autumn Is Here and Theodore Maynard's Earth-Bound had, indeed, already attracted more than a little attention.

The Official Catholic Year Book. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. $4.00.

THE Kenedys have done everything possible to make the first number of what one hopes will be a long list of official Catholic Year Books a very handsome and easily consulted volume. Most of the information incorporated was supplied by the various bureaus of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, which has become the central statistical agency on all matters pertaining to the Church in America. Here is a handy though somewhat curtailed diocesan directory; a digest of the year's ecclesiastical news; a brief history of the Church in this country; and diverse special articles reviewing institutionalized endeavors. The whole is a really excellent job of coördination and printing. Some rather bad mistakes must, of course, be expected in such a book. One of the worst slips, it seems to us, is the inclusion in a summary of "important Catholic books" of Mr. Charles C. Marshall's recent work. Once it has been established, the Year Book will, no doubt, improve rapidly and commendably; but the first number has indeed set a high standard.

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